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# New Statesman

DUNCAN CAMPBELL
WAR LAWS 2

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New Statesman

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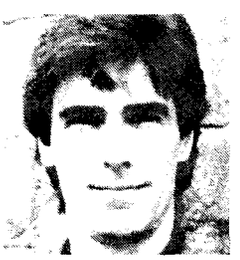
### PAIN AND EVIL

'Torturers' motives would only be a moral prize if we supposed humans possess a natural empathy for the suffering of others. But why should we assume any such thing?' MICHAEL IGNATIEFF (right), provocative philosopher and historian, traces a line of moral thinking from torture to terrorism.



### LIBTALK

PETER KELLNER, our own original new realist, casts a shrewd eye over the Liberal Party's assembly in Dundee

### ISLAM

Are Muslim schools in Britain the next step for a progressive multi-cultural society — or a concession to a reactionary Islamic fundamentalism? MOHSIN A. BANGASH and JOLYON JENKINS take a hard look at what lies behind the pressure for Islamic education

JON COOK reviews Günter Grass's essays on writing and politics

New Statesman

Vol 110 No 2842 13 September 1985

# Handsworth *is* a social issue

DOUGLAS HURD went to Handsworth on Tuesday, he said, to listen. In fact he went there as a public relations exercise to show that, as the new Home Secretary, he was on top of the job and not on holiday. His presence, with attendant TV cameras, provoked more violence and for his pains he was stoned.

Proof that the Home Secretary was in fact not there to listen was that he immediately came out with prejudiced conclusions, which could not have been based on what little he had either seen or heard. He was ready to assert authoritatively that what happened in that part of Birmingham was 'not a social phenomenon but crimes'.

This week has seen yet another very serious breakdown of law and order in Britain. They are becoming common under Thatcher. In the circumstances a newly appointed Thatcherite law and order minister feels a political need to stress that the rule of law will be maintained with more police by 'pursuing and arresting those who commit breaches of the law'.

A politically more experienced Home Secretary would have resisted the advice of his PR advisers to be seen at the battle front. He should have waited for the crisis to cool and then concentrated on establishing what went wrong and what should be done about it in future. Having been chased out of Handsworth, Hurd — despite getting the job on a reputation of being slightly more liberal than his predecessor Leon Brittan — has already considered it politically necessary to pledge crackdown rather than reform.

The enquiry into Handsworth will no doubt discover a range of factors that contributed to the explosion. Funds for community projects that have to some extent kept the lid on social frustration in the area have been severely reduced as a result of expenditure cuts. The area is one of extensive alcohol and drug use, with the hard drug trade coming in where soft drug use was already well established. Local 'community policing' tactics may have recently become rather more aggressive, provoking tension. The relatively hot evening weather at the end of a cold summer may have encouraged more than usual onto the streets. Recent coverage of events in South Africa may have encouraged the black community into similar self-assertiveness.

In the last analysis most of this is irrelevant. The reality in 1985 is that communities like Handsworth are a powder keg that may explode at any moment. Why it should happen here and not there, now and not then, is happenstance. The character of the social powder keg is that the economic and social consequences of the recession, brutally enhanced by the deliberate policies of this Thatcher government, and by the absence of any political power for such communities, have created a situation in whole communities like Handsworth of utter hopelessness.

Mr Hurd demonstrates complete lack of social understanding in being able to say that what has happened is *not* a social phenomenon. Individuals may, but large parts of whole communities do not, take to drugs and alcohol unless they find their present position intolerable and their future prospects hopeless. Criminals there will always be, but wholesale rioting, looting and arson does not take place except in circumstances where social cohesion has ceased to exist, where the dispossessed



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cease to consider themselves bound by the restraints of convention about property. Significantly, the looting was not racially oriented. It was not blacks against Asians: it was the dispossessed of Handsworth, who are largely black, against the shopkeepers and property owners of Handsworth, who are mainly Asian and white.

Mrs Thatcher again demonstrated her failure to understand the consequences of the economic policy her government has been following for six years when she implied that there was no excuse for rioting because 'everyone has a vote, everyone has civil rights'. Exactly how do people exercise those rights to improve their own lives when a government with a massive majority takes away civil rights with measures like the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, and removes strategic elected authorities like the West Midlands Metropolitan Council at will, and ties the hands of smaller local authorities with rate-capping? But quite apart from her sanctimonious and elitist view of political rights, the failure to understand what the prospect of eternal joblessness does to people is the key to the legacy that Thatcherism will leave to this country.

If in 1979 it had been forecast that the incoming government would stick to policies that led to real unemployment rising to 4 million, hitting mainly the young and the black, while cutting all aspects of the welfare state and continuing to make stupendous tax concessions to those best off in society, it would not have taken a sociological genius to predict the outcome.

That is in the event what the Thatcher government did — and Handsworth is the outcome. □

# SDP has a long way still to go

WILLIAM WALLACE, the Liberal Party vice-president and policy adviser, in a sense dominated the Social Democrats' annual gathering in Torquay this week. David Steel shrugged it all off as well as he could — Wallace is not a *senior* adviser, what he wrote was done months ago, just one temporarily disillusioned point of view, etc. But what his leaked internal memorandum about the state of the Liberal-SDP alliance contained goes rather obviously to the hub of the problem that the two parties face: the Liberals are not ready to become a party of government and the SDP's leadership of ex-Labour ministers is a rapidly wasting asset.

The SDP was from the start more affected in its success by the actions of the two main political parties than by its own efforts. The dream of a party that would 'break the mould of British politics' was Roy Jenkins's, after he had ceased to be a socialist, and the rest of the Gang of Four eventually joined him to launch the new party because they did not like the way in which they and the rest of the traditional Labour Right had lost control of the party for the first time since the war. The explosive success of the party in its early stages, when it briefly touched 50 per cent in the polls even before it was remotely organised as a party, was a reaction by large sections of the electorate against pre-Falklands Thatcher and what seemed a Benn-Scargill dominated Labour Party.

Now, about half way through the second Thatcher government, the Alliance is sitting much more stably with around about a third of the potential votes. In theory this could be a very strong base for the run up to the next general election. But in order actually to make credible talk of a possible Alliance government next time, Liberal David and SDP David will have to provide convincing answers to the Wallace questions. For the 1985 party conference season it will no doubt be enough to stage displays of platform unity. But, as the next election approaches, the electorate will be asking itself in public the questions that Wallace was asking Steel in private.

For a start, the third party centre ground of British politics is very narrow. As the Tory government in reaction to by-election results and poll returns contrives U-turns of policy and as Labour under Neil Kinnock continues a policy and presentational drift to the Right, it will be increasingly difficult to map out any major or distinctive third party position between the Labour Right and the Tory Left. 'Style' alone is unlikely to be enough.

The key to any further real advance by the Alliance in the direction of winning an election will be what if anything it can do to attract the political allegiances of the skilled working class. In the 1979 election this dominant group voted Tory for the first time ever in significant numbers and accounted for the bulk of the swing to Thatcher.

In the pre-Falklands period the group swung right away from the Tories, disillusioned by inflation and the fact that Thatcherite economics only favoured the very rich, while expenditure on services was being cut. For a while the skilled working class then flirted with the new SDP in the phase after its launch, when it presented itself as the party that offered all things to all men and women. This flirtation largely accounted for the extraordinary SDP by-election results at Warrington and Crosby. But that honeymoon was soon over.

## Owen is going for broke

It is difficult to see how the SDP with its present leadership is going to develop any further appeal in this part of the political spectrum. The party remains dominated by the political will and ambition of its leader, David Owen. Indeed his supercharged will to get back into government, preferably as Prime Minister, is both one of the most impressive factors on the contemporary political scene and almost the sole reason why the SDP continues to be treated as a serious political force by the media.

But, given the tiny real political base from which Owen is forced to operate, there is a danger for the SDP that his style of politics will come to be seen as and sound increasingly pretentious to the electorate. In Torquay, for example, much time and energy was devoted to really quite small shifts in SDP defence policy in the expectation that there would be corresponding shifts towards the SDP on the part of the Liberals.

The debate was set in the context of the US-Soviet arms negotiations in Geneva. Yet the notion that anything that the Liberals or the SDP say now or later about defence is going to influence the positions of the White House or the Kremlin over Geneva will seem increasingly absurd to anyone who is not impressed by the fact that Dr Owen was once briefly a Labour Foreign Secretary. Parties in the position of the SDP usually concentrate more effectively on more bread and butter issues.

The obsession with differences over defence policy highlights another contradiction in the Liberal-SDP Alliance. It is the one area in which they have had a significant formal and public policy difference. Yet, we are told, it is important that there should be two separate parties with separate identities. Yet when these two different parties have different policies even in one area, their leaderships struggle to paper over the cracks. If the platforms must be made identical, what is the need for separate parties?

The reality of the electoral position of the SDP within the Alliance is that, if it cannot insist on proportional representation as a result of the next general election, its days of effective independence will be over. It is not a mass party in the country, even by Liberal standards, and there is no reason to suppose that it can ever become one.

In other words, Dr Owen is playing a political game with high personal stakes and a short time-scale. If he does not get what he wants this time, he is very likely to show us all that he is not joking when he says that he is not too old to think of going back to medicine. □



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# WILL STONED HURD NOW RETHINK 'POT' LAWS?

**AMONG FLASHPOINTS cited for Monday's Handsworth, Birmingham, riot the *Guardian*'s David Rose quoted black youths alleging a local police policy switch — a crackdown on cannabis use and sale as part of the drive on hard drugs. ROBERT SILVER extracts the latest Home Office statistics, buried in supplementary tables, for the UK's out-of-step practise of jailing people for unlawful possession of 'pot' without intent to supply**

490 PEOPLE were jailed in the UK in 1984 for this offence. Moves have been made, notably by Lord Avebury in 1982, to remove prison as a penalty. In the Netherlands, New York and California possession attracts at most only a small fine.

In Britain in 1984, sixty people went to prison for 6 months on this charge — two for more than five years — and 10,237 were fined. The 'imprisoned' figure is down on the 1983 tally of 555, but still indicates a significantly more severe policy on soft drugs for personal consumption in Britain than in any other Western European country.

Some of the 490 who went to prison *may* have possessed substantial amounts and *may* even have been dealers, but police couldn't prove it and do have the option, if they have the evidence, of bringing a charge of possession with intent to supply. Courts aren't entitled to treat users as dealers if police haven't brought the relevant charge and if the evidence doesn't support the inference.

The Home Office isn't precisely a mine of information on this matter. Statistics offered don't give a breakdown for the quantities of cannabis that were seized from people later jailed. They don't indicate how many were second or subsequent offenders. Nor do they reveal whether some of them were simultaneously convicted for different offences.

## Official caprice

The Legalise Cannabis Campaign (LCC), based in Sheffield, draws attention to the capricious treatment of offenders. Some Inner City police forces now only caution cannabis users. At Heathrow incoming travellers with less than half-an-ounce of cannabis only suffer confiscation and on the spot fines without going to court.

Rural police forces, for instance Leicestershire and the Lake District, are thought more likely to prosecute and demand maximum penalties, yet there's been a recent crackdown in Birmigham, Leeds and Bristol. Last December, a defendant in Liverpool crown court facing a 'simple' possession charge after being found with four milligrams of cannabis in a 'roach' (cigarette butt) — less than 1p's worth — was sentenced to six months in prison when an earlier suspended sentence was reactivated.

Given that the average cost of keeping someone in overcrowded jails is, on Home Office figures, £234 a week the cost of the policy is well over £1 million a year. The estimated number of one-time consumers of cannabis in this country according to the National Crime Survey is 3 million. It may well be more.

The LCC calculates that if the Government legalised cannabis and levied a tax equivalent to the tariff currently enjoyed by dealers it would make £1 billion a year.

## Pressure from MPs

A nucleus of MPs on both sides of the House favours liberalisation. Alf Dubs, a Labour home affairs spokesperson, believes treatment of cannabis users is highly arbitrary and wants a fuller public debate.

John Wheeler, a Tory member of the Select Committee on Home Affairs and a former prison governor, calls the policy 'a misuse of public expenditure which diverts resources from a crackdown on herion pushers. It brings the criminal law into disrepute.'

Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, MP for Kensington, says his 'West Indian constituents find the ban on cannabis highly hypocritical given the authorities' tolerant attitude towards tobacco and alcohol'. He favours the controlled availability of cannabis by prescription from chemists' shops.

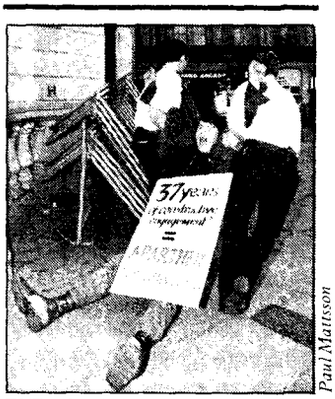
The government has shifted its position slightly since 1982, when it said more research was needed. Mrs Thatcher, answering a letter from the LCC at the end of January this year, said 'the government accepts that there is some evidence to suggest that there are a number of people who could use cannabis for recreational purposes, if it were legalised, responsibly and without serious ill

Derek Bishton

**SHIRLEY WILLIAMS at SDP conference called him 'brave' to go among the Handsworth, Birmingham, crowds this Tuesday 10 September, and so he was, though so we'd expect of the Home Secretary — Douglas Hurd, who resists every argument except that 'criminal' elements rioted.** ***See also pp12-13.***

Moves to liberalise the law on soft drugs are currently under way in Spain and Australia. Legalisation or even decriminalisation in this country would probably be going too far for most Tory backbenchers, according to Wheeler and Rhys Williams.

But, with backing from the Labour Party and the Alliance a private members' Bill to remove prison as an available penalty for 'simple' possession of cannabis might get through Parliament.




Paul Mattsson

**THE ACTION continues outside South Africa House, as Tutu calls Reagan a 'racist', as Rev Jesse Jackson horrifically shakes hands with Rev Jerry Falwell after debating South Africa on American TV — and as Petra Kelly occupies W Germany's Pretoria embassy.**

# Oh no! Not Hayhoe to run the nation's body politic!

*IT'S BECOMING clear that almost by stealth and perhaps by inattention the selection of Barney Hayhoe (*Brentford & Isleworth*) to replace Kenneth Clarke as minister of Health in the autumn reshuffle could be the most damaging single decision just taken by Mrs Thatcher about her team — unless his apparent prejudices can be held in check.*

*Last Sunday the* Observer *cited 'veteran law abortion reformer' Madaleine Simms as calling the promotion 'very unfortunate'. The problem, for a minister of Health in a society of plural communities and a plurality of views on the 'politics' of the body, is that Hayhoe is a Roman Catholic. Or rather — that he appears to stick remarkably close to the policies the faith is known to favour.*

*He has been a consistent opponent of extensions in abortion rights for women, and was a supporter of Enoch Powell's failed bill to ban embryo research. Though 'hoping to be proved wrong' Madaleine Simms was quoted by the* Observer *as voicing the worry felt by women's health professionals that 'any Catholic will not be very helpful'. Non-denominational Clarke by contrast backed the pill for under-16s three years ago.*

*Replacement of a liberal Conservative by a Conservative of reactionary minority faith in one of the most sensitive ministries looks bad enough for women's issues in medicine. There's more yet. Hayhoe takes over the DHSS response to AIDS — where the vulnerability of gay men is of maximum political and social delicacy — immediately after concluding a term at the Treasury where he presided over the ongoing Customs prosecution of Gay's the Word and its nine lesbian or gay voluntary workers (*NS *23 August).*

*Mrs Thatcher has put into Health, in the person of Barney Hayhoe, a declared opponent of a Freedom of Information Bill and a man who once — as civil service minister — refused to say how many press officers are employed by Whitehall, since it would cost too much to discover the answer. Here's just one faint light: in the '60s he lobbied for upping child allowances to needy families.*

**Andrew Lumsden**



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# APOPLECTIC DHSS WHEEDLES AND WHINES TO WHITEWASH PSI REPORT

**AT LAST, the 'independent' Policy Studies Institute (PSI) has published a report, originally completed 18 months ago, on the work of local DHSS offices. It has been 'substantially rewritten' under pressure from the DHSS, which commissioned it, as JOHN RENTOUL reports**

THE REPORT was part of a project to evaluate the effect of social security changes made in 1980. Working Papers A, B and D to F were published in July last year, but Working Paper C was 'delayed'. Leaks in the *New Statesman* (27 July and 14 September 1984) and on the BBC's *Panorama* programme showed why.

The report revealed a bleak picture of understaffed benefit offices struggling to run a complex system that neither staff nor claimants understood. Staff often took a negative view of the system, but more importantly of claimants — PSI's researchers recorded anti-claimant and sometimes racist opinions, and observed many cases of claimants being denied their entitlement. The whole point of the 1980 reforms was to give claimants a *legal right* to 'special needs payments', which had previously been discretionary.

Working Paper C was proudly presented to the DHSS by the head of the project at PSI, Richard Berthoud, in April 1984. But DHSS mandarins were apoplectic. Copies of correspondence between the DHSS and PSI obtained by the *NS* show how the DHSS browbeat an 'independent' research body into first delaying and then — when leaks made publication unavoidable — rewriting the controversial report.

## 'Suggestions'. . .

Norman Warner, then Assistant Secretary in charge of supplementary benefit, wrote to Berthoud at PSI on 22 June 1984 thanking him for 'your suggestion that Working Paper C should not be published with the other papers'. He suggested an untrue form of words PSI could use to explain non-publication: 'The text of an adequate working paper. . .was not available when other working papers were ready for publication.'

After publication of the other papers, Berthoud wrote to the DHSS saying PSI would be 'happy to reconsider' the analysis and presentation of Working Paper C, and added: 'I hope that you are your colleagues will contribute by identifying those parts of the report which have caused greatest concern.' To his credit, he defended the report's 'clear conclusions' that relations between DHSS staff and claimants were 'on the wrong footing'.

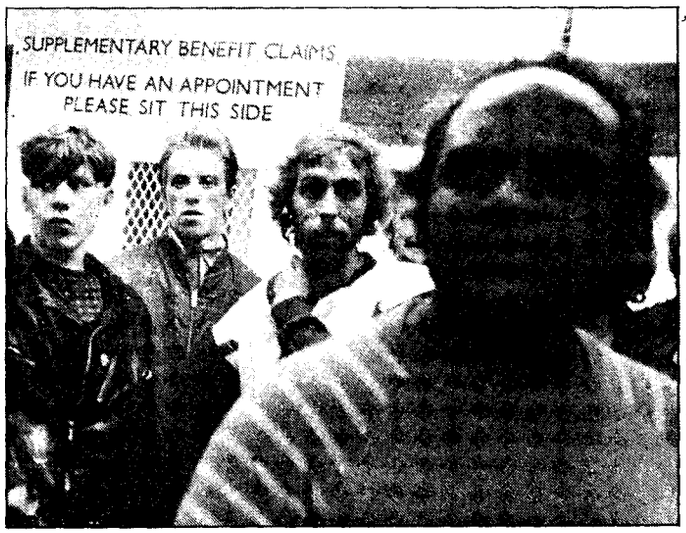
The DHSS responded in August 1984 with an even harder attitude. Graham Hart, Warner's successor, replied 'I cannot see how the material could be revised to overcome [our misgivings]'. But he gave a detailed response to the report. The DHSS's main concern was that 'our staff will consider that they have been misled and their trust abused' by being quoted, four-letter words and all.

Hart also complained that the 10 offices visited were not 'representative', that 'sweeping statements' were made and that the report lacked 'balance'. What is more, he wrote, staff were widely quoted using the word 'punter' when referring to claimants. 'This strengthens our view that the document is not representative of offices generally.'

But the *NS* leaks meant PSI had to publish some form of the report. In February this year the matter was taken up by PSI director John Pinder with Sir Geoffrey Otton, number two in the DHSS hierarchy. 'We have taken extremely careful note of the department's response to the working paper,' he wrote, and it had now been 'revised'. This included a 'substantial re-write of the most controversial chapter'. And, said Pinder, 'some of the wording of the first version was too highly coloured, and the tone is now neutral'. Even the number of uses of the word 'punter' had been 'halved'.

There was no response from the DHSS, so Pinder's successor Donald Derx wrote again to Sir Geoffrey in May this year inviting 'further comments on the revised draft' and saying: 'We are anxious that any med a interest in Paper C should not overshadow the presentation of our other types of research and policy analysis.'

Last week the revised report — which nevertheless presents an alarming picture of DHSS local offices — was quietly published. 'Media interest' was not in danger of 'overshadowing' anything.




Katalin Arkell/Network

**DEGRADING in every inner city area. No judicial enquiry needed into Handsworth. Let Douglas Hurd — and Norman Fowler — just spend a day queuing in one of these and they'll know what millions know.** ●

## Expletives deleted

The changes affect the substance of the report. The words 'coon' and 'jewboy' used by staff to describe claimants have been deleted in favour of a blander narrative and a more 'analytical' discussion of racial prejudice. Richard Berthoud, who made the changes, explains that he doesn't want 'attention diverted from the main issues'.

But the less 'sensational' parts of the report were 'edited' too. A minor example: *ORIGINAL* (commenting on a refusal of a payment to Mr O) 'In Mr O's case there was a need, and he was almost certainly entitled to a grant.' *REVISED STANDARD VERSION*: 'This may well have been an incorrect decision.'

Some 'last minute changes' were made, Berthoud admitted, without consulting the report's author, Steven Cooper, who has left PSI. He told the *NS*: 'PSI does quite a bit of work for government departments like the DHSS, so I'm not surprised that a close working relationship has developed. What is most worrying is that the current supplementary benefit system, at least in theory, offers some protection to claimants in the form of rules and rights. The Fowler Review proposals will scrap these altogether, and award the same overpressed officials unlimited discretion to act as they see fit. I doubt that the service to claimants will improve.' ●

# Seaside extra! Extra!

**THE TUC decided last week that it's in favour of developing all forms of energy production except perhaps the American-style pressurised water reactor (PWR) planned for Sizewell in Suffolk. Its decision — widely misreported — was a fudge in the classic TUC tradition.**

During compositing, the National Union of Mineworkers bowed to pressure from the engineering workers' union (AUEW) and the Institution of Professional Civil Servants (IPCS) to water down its strongly anti-nuclear motion by deleting two key phrases: its demand that 'all future power stations should be fired by coal' and its assertion that PWRs are definitely 'a major safety hazard'.

The resulting composite said only that 'the security of future generations *may* be the determination of this Government to force an expansion of nuclear power stations centred on PWRs'.

Such non-committal blandness — in effect reaffirming existing policy — meant that delegates were able to witness the extraordinary spectacle of miners' leader Arthur Scargill in apparent agreement with the AUEW's Gavin Laird, the electricians' Eric Hammond, and the nuclear enthusiasts in the Engineers' and Managers' Association.

●

**TRYING to discover what happened on energy at this week's SDP conference in Torquay isn't easy. According to Monday's *Glasgow Herald*, it was agreed to rephrase vice-president Bill Rogers' environment policy motion so as to allow the party to support the plan to build a new European plutonium fuel reprocessing plant at Dounreay on the north coast of Scotland.**

Not so, said the same day's *Scotsman*, which reported that the plea from a pro-nuclear Highland delegate to alter the motion was rejected. So, ever anxious for the truth, *NS* rang the SDP press office at Torquay. 'Oh we don't know' said a much harassed voice. 'Hang on, I'll ask the journalists... It really is pandemonium down here... We're sitting here surrounded by 50 journalists and have to spend all our time fielding their questions.'

Several phone calls later we were able to extract a statement which is, well, as clear as mud: 'There was no motion directly concerning Dounreay. There was an amendment, the force of which if agreed would be to stop all future nuclear power developments, but this wasn't passed. The policy committee's motion was approved. This says that there should be no major new development of nuclear power until the nuclear waste problem is solved. This does not affect Dounreay which is a reprocessing plant'. Ah!

**Rob Edwards**



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# Asians write to Havers about the *Daily Mail*

**A NEW UMBRELLA group of nearly 30 Asians and white organisations has written to the Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, asking him to start criminal proceedings against the** *Daily Mail* for incitement to racial hatred in its 'Bride-for-Sale', front page story of 5 August (*NS* 9 Aug).

'Working Group Against Daily Mail Racism' was formed when the *Mail's* editors in London and Manchester refused to meet representatives of the Asian community protesting against the story. In its letter to Sir Michael, the group claims the 5 August *Mail* story was 'a slur on the honesty and integrity of Asian working people.'

By publishing such an 'abusive and insulting article, the *Mail* has committed a criminal offence under the Race Relations Act 1976.' The letter says that since no prosecution for incitement to racial hatred can be instituted except by or with the consent of the Attorney General, they are asking him to allow a case.

The Working Group has organised a series of three protest assemblies outside the *Daily Mail* office in Manchester, and two large public meetings. Over 28 community, cultural, trade union, and political organisations, groups and campaigns have pledged their support.

The group has also produced a portable exhibition which puts the *Daily Mail* article into the context of what it describes as 'a history of racist and provocative articles published in the *Mail* and other papers.'

The exhibition is currently being displayed as part of a three-week campaign outside the *Daily Mail* Manchester office. Over 3000 people signed the Group's petition 'opposing the divisive racism of the *Daily Mail*' in the first week of its campaign. There has been a constant picket outside the *Mail's* Manchester office for the last 10 days.

**Anwar Iqbal**

# Now Brixton has its strip search scandal

**TWO IRISH WOMEN on remand in Brixton prison are being subjected to humiliating strip and body searches so often that their lawyer fears for their mental well-being.**

The women, Ella O'Dwyer and Martina Anderson, have been remanded since the start of July on explosives charges connected with the Brighton bombing. They are being taken before magistrates every week — under conditions of tight security — to have the remand period extended.

They are strip searched before and after each court appearance, after every legal and social visit, and on random occasions up to three times a week. There are also body searches (i.e. with clothes on): in a random week from 5 August to 10 August inclusive, Anderson was body-searched 34 times and O'Dwyer 26 times. (These figures are the women's own.)

They have no contact with other prisoners apart from an East German woman accused of spying. On one occasion when they talked to men out of a window they had privileges withdrawn for a week.

Their solicitor, Mike Fisher, says: 'I have never heard of such security in a British prison — they are going absolutely over the top. These women haven't been convicted of anything and are being treated like pariahs.' Fisher believes that Brixton's staff are taking revenge on the women because of their own failure to stop Gerald Tuite from escaping while he was remanded there in 1982.

Frequent complaints by the women to the prison governor and the Home Office have had no effect and Fisher is now considering legal proceedings on their behalf — perhaps an application for judicial review or an action for assault — and may soon insist that they are examined by a psychiatrist.

**Jolyon Jenkins**

# MISCELLANY

## Touched in the head

Sober news from Touche Ross, the City firm of accountants. A true and fair view of accountants in general, lefty ones apart of course, must surely be that they have no popular reputation for sparkling conversation, joie de vivre, or surpassing job excitement. The only things supposed to bring zip to their lives are schemes to outwit the Inland

Revenue, and a little seasonal indulgence in alcohol. The poor souls working in Touche Ross (known within the profession as Touch Wood, and we can now see why) are to be deprived of their last remaining human attribute. Staff are warned in the latest Staff Regulations that drunkenness either inside or *outside* office hours is verboten and punishable with the sack. No, not Dry Sack — the sack. Reports of queues of Touche employees outside the personnel manager's door handing in their resignation letter every morning are exaggerated. But their employers' minds, it can be said without qualification, need auditing.

## Blue language

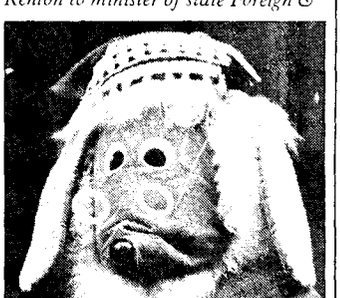
*On Monday two of Scotland's most publicity-crazed Conservatives, Iain would-be-MP Lawson, (see* Miscellany *10 May 1985) and Paul Martin, leader of Edinburgh's minority Tory Group, held a press conference. Before the assembled hacks, the dynamic duo unleashed a fearsome attack on Labour councillors for wasting ratepayers' money by attending a 'political' conference on local authority publicity campaigns this week. One slight problem — the conference in question was cancelled nearly two months ago.*

## Fluck of the draw

Extraordinary thing. Like the spontaneous combustion that befell that rag and bone merchant in the recent TV version of Dickens' *Bleak House*, you — Miscellany readers — have burst into anagrams of the name of new Home Sec Douglas Hurd. 'Gush, dour lad', says Phil Ashmore of Derbyshire, and 'should guard' our liberties, admonishes R A Edwards of Herts, while, adding on 'MP', 'Should drug a PM', says Gary Reynolds of SW20; and so say all of us. But rapped knuckles all round, for what we actually invited you to do, as you well know, and admit in your letters, is to offer short sitcoms based on the names of celebrated periodicals, for future broadcast by the BBC — in honour of the ghastly fact that, for six weeks beginning this Thursday, Beeb 2 is running a sitcom called (aargh) *The New Statesman*. John Keenan of N15 has actually followed the rules, hooray, and offers to the BBC a *Harper's & Queen* serial: 'Queen is a lovable working class widow who is re-housed following the demolition of her home. Due to a bureaucratic mixup she becomes the occupant of a stately home. The only other inhabitant is a snooty butler named Harpers. This touchingly funny sit-com develops as the outcasts from very different worlds take potshots at each other in the trenches of class-war'. John will get a free Luck & Flaw squeaky toy. And so will anyone else who can think of a good named-for-the-media sitcom. Go on, have at it.

## Renton's promotion

*And lo, there was a slip-up in* The Times *cuttings-library. And so it came about that on Thursday 5 September, in reporting on one of the lesser wrinkles in the government's face-lift, the promotion of Timothy Renton to minister of state Foreign &*



Syndication International

**'Now about UN Article VI...'**

*Commonwealth Office, the newspaper-of-record informed the world diplomatic corps that City slicker, Lloyds underwriter, member for mid-Sussex Timothy Renton, aged 53, 'was Great Uncle Bulgaria in the Wombles pop group in the early 1970s'. The next day's correction was sheer heaven:* The Times*'s' statement that Timothy Renton once held a position in the entertainment industry was incorrect'. Rumour has it that in the corridors of the FCO civil servants now refer to 'that bulgar Renton'. At least the Foreign Office need never again go naked into the conference chamber. It can go dressed as a Womble.*



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Ralph Steadman

Camera Press

**MRS T's beamish boy, who shot an arrow in the air, it fell to earth in Smith Square — Jeffrey Archer, who's to set us all an example as Tory campaigner**

# 'Not a penny more — for investment'

Tebbit's novel No 2 in the Tory Party organisation, Jeffrey Archer, is the shining example of the spirit of enterprise to the well-salaried potential investor. When he lost his own pot of gold and his job as an MP in September 1974, he didn't become a captive to caution and look for a tax-encouraged pension and an institutionally invested life policy. He bounced back through that high-risk, high-return occupation, best-seller writing.

It's risk-taking by a new generation of individual investors that will build industry and employment and make us rich by our own boldness, says Jeffrey. We've been given the instrument, the Business Expansion Scheme (BES), and the proliferation of mutual investment funds launched by the City under its banner must indicate that the spirit has touched all manner of people.

But before the saviourette briefs the Saatchis to preach its merits for a wider conversion, even the faithful among the money men should point out that the BES reaches the wrong individuals, excludes the likely ones and, like most tax shelters on a massive scale, produces nonsense investment. If you doubt the dud socio-economic impact of tax shelters, have a look at the recent overproduction of US condominiums.

The BES, launched in 1983 as a successor to the 1981 Business Start Up Scheme, is designed to be a potentially massive tax shelter. Up to £40,000 of income a year can be relieved from the top rate of tax (60 per cent), interest on a loan used to buy a sufficiently large stake in a qualifying company can be relieved against income tax; and the full cost of the investment is the base point for any subsequent capital gains tax assessment.

But who has £40,000 a year spare and how innovative are they anyway? The real BES punters aren't the new Archer-style converts to individualism at all, but those who already have a pile and therefore have some risk money to play with out of large investment incomes. They are by definition old-fashioned portfolio investors, preferably looking for a spread of risks even for their gambling money.

They don't particularly want to invest in an idea for making solar-powered earmuffs because they know that daring pioneers at the frontiers of technology have always lost money. The nature of their 'gamble' is this: even if they only get back, after five years, exactly what they put in, the fact that their BES-rules investment is relieved from income tax at the top rate of 60 per cent provides them with the equivalent of an after tax return of 20 per cent per annum.

The real successes in pulling in the punters for BES funds were originally investment in farmland (spectacularly so) and in property development, but both are now barred. The fund managers won't of course tell anyone that the BES is a political failure because, given the size of the tax relief involved, they can persuade investors to part with 4 or 5 per cent in up-front fees.

On the contrary, as they jet back from New York or LA the faithful will tell you that the cautiousness of the supposedly high-risk investor is precisely why they need a Saatchi campaign to promote this new tool of enterprise.

The moral, as with most doctrinaire models of investment, is that such inventions seldom override the common sense of money for long. Common sense suggests that the powerful push for new investment will come from the unpopular sources of organised money, banks, pension funds and life assurance, which are already learning to live with and harness the venture capital industry. In the long run artificial devices like the BES will be economically neutral — not a penny more for investment, not a penny less, one might say.

**Christopher Marley**



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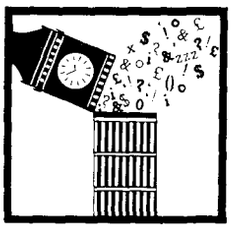

# SDP guards vote against driver-only operated party

*Torquay*

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS are nice people. This week they held a nice conference in a nice place and passed a lot of nice resolutions. There we all were — politicians, delegates and media folk — mingling in the sunshine at the Palace Hotel's extensive and beautiful grounds. Some people sat under palm trees discussing fiscal reform. Others lay on the grass worrying about inner city deprivation. Yet others went for a swim and worried about the next free drinks party. All in all, the SDP conference had the air of a CIA-financed jamboree that had got just slightly out of hand — one of those events where no expense is spared to gather like-minded people in amenable surroundings in order to reinforce their faith in apple pie and motherhood.

The formal gathering inside the conference hall demonstrated the ambiguity of the whole exercise — was it a real policy-making conference, or merely a rally of the innocent being instructed in their duty by a leadership comprising people with several squillion years' ministerial experience? Most of the time the conference met as the 'Council for Social Democracy': resolutions were passed, seconded, debated and either passed or defeated. At other times the conference met as a 'consultative assembly', in which any SDP member who could spare the time and the money to come to Torquay could join in the fun. In assembly sessions, discussion papers were debated without the gathering being required to come to any particular conclusion.

Yet despite the seductive environment and the manifest wish of the leadership to make sure that delegates did as they were told, evidence just occasionally emerged of a real party struggling to get out. The first instance of this came on Monday morning during a debate on electoral reform. The main resolution demanded 'an electoral system which gives real political choice to the people and fairly represents their wishes'. It did not specify any particular system, and was deliberately worded to leave David Owen with a free hand to negotiate with the Labour or Conservative parties should the Alliance hold the balance of power.

The debate that followed did not dispute the need for proportional representation: such is the devotion to electoral reform as well as to 'responsible' economic policy, and such is the erudition of SDP delegates, that Ian Wrigglesworth was able to declaim from the platform that 'for us PR is as important as PSBR' and be received with the kind of ecstatic applause normally reserved for an announcement of the second coming during one of Billy Graham's evangelical crusades.

What did divide delegates was an amendment to the main resolution. This demanded that a specific system of PR — the Single Transferable Vote — be adopted as party policy, and that the leadership come back next year with a detailed set of proposals on which the party would campaign, and which would commit Dr Owen in any post-election negotiations. Replying from the platform Stuart Maxwell of the SDP's National Committee complained that this would place 'unnecessary restrictions on our MPs in negotiations that would take place at the time of a balanced parliament'.

In other words 'You lot think you have the right to tell us up here what to do. You don't. We're happy to pretend that you have that right — but only as long as you don't exercise it.' Well, they did: the council voted overwhelmingly for the amendment.

## PETER KELLNER

It was not the first time that SDP delegates have overturned the leadership's policy. It happened three years ago at Great Yarmouth when the platform was defeated over the precise nature of the SDP's incomes policy. But that was essentially a clash between Roy Jenkins (then the party's leader) and David Owen. Delegates were taking sides on a battle within the Gang of Four. This week's vote was a real peasants' revolt.

In the grand order of things the result will change little. As one delegate said in another debate — on Alliance strategy — 'I don't care what you vote for because it doesn't really matter.' Yet in terms of the SDP's own view of itself — who's driving the bus and where — the debate on electoral reform was important. It demonstrated that delegates wanted to convert the SDP from a David Owen fan-club into a real political party.

BUT WHAT KIND of real party is the SDP turning into? Four years after its birth it is no longer a collection of ex-Labour politicians: two-thirds of the SDP's members have come from the Tories or the Liberals or the nationalists or from no previous political party. Even among those with Labour roots there is less hostility to their old party than there used to be. Individual grudge-matches will doubtless continue: I can imagine no circumstances in which David Owen and Roy Hattersley could ever again relax together over a glass of wine in a television hospitality suite. But by and large the SDP has ceased to define itself in terms of the traumas of its birth.

So what does it stand for? Left-of-centre critics tend to condemn the SDP as 'mere fluff' (James Callaghan) or as throwbacks to the worst features of Labour's past or as people endemically incapable of making hard choices.

Evidence may certainly be adduced for each of these propositions. Monday's debate on the economy very much suggested a party seeking an average between Labour and Conservative policy. On the one hand the SDP wants a £5 billion reflationary package: on the other hand the party 'advocates keeping a firm grip on money supply and stabilising the sterling exchange rate'.

Yet there is more to the SDP these days. It is groping towards an identity that ought to be — but is not — Labour's natural possession. That identity is not defined in traditional ideological terms — hence the lack of enthusiasm for the party to accept a 'centre left' or indeed any other ideological label. By conventional analysis this is a weakness. Economic power and political power are largely indivisible, and the SDP's failure to establish an identity in ideological terms is tantamount to an evasion of the hard questions about the distribution of power in society.

But there is more to politics than that. To oversimplify a complex point it concerns the morality of political behaviour: issues to do with tolerance, compassion, civil liberties and mutual respect. In as far as SDP members have something in common it is that they share these 'moral' values.

The potential electoral appeal of this kind of politics should not be underestimated. Governments win or lose elections according to their record and their ability to manipulate public perceptions of that record. Oppositions do not have the same kind of records to defend: they are in the business of selling their potential to govern.

At present, despite the Alliance's 30 per cent plus opinion poll ratings, it still does not appear as a credible alternative government. Last weekend's leak on Channel 4's 'A Week in Politics' of the memorandum by David Steel's adviser, William Wallace, damages the Alliance precisely because it widens that credibility gap.

But suppose that gap is closed. Suppose Labour fails to regain its ascendancy on the 'moral' issues. Suppose David Owen and David Steel succeed in outmanoeuvring Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley as competent political leaders.

The result would be too horrifying for any left-winger to contemplate. Historically, the SDP's refusal to take any clear view on the proper relationship between capital and labour may condemn it to impotence should it ever share power. But meanwhile the party is developing an increasingly sharp image on a series of issues and values that many people care about. We should not underestimate the potential of its appeal — even when it does look like a collection of better-off people lying around in the sun. □



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EXCLUSIVE



# IF WAR CAME CLOSE WE WOULD HAVE NEW MASTERS

**An unprecedented secret UK-US agreement means that in a crisis Britain would give priority to American military requirements. US forces would have the right to enforce martial law and would be provided with impressed civilian labour, reveal DUNCAN CAMPBELL and PATRICK FORBES**

A TOP SECRET 1983 agreement between Britain and the United States reverses a longstanding NATO policy — that each ally should provide its own logistic resources to its forces in Europe. Details of this agreement, given to the *New Statesman* this week, have made senior defence planners ask whether Mrs Thatcher's government may have sold out British national interests.

The new pact is called the US-UK Lines of Communication Agreement (USUKLOC). It covers the supply routes along which reinforcements, ammunition and equipment would be moved from the rear 'Zone of the Interior' (the United States itself) to the Forward Battle Area (West Germany and Norway). Britain is 'indispensable', according to US planners, as the main staging post for hundreds of thousands of troops who would travel on air and sea routes between North America and continental Europe (see map).

Within Whitehall, the agreement is controversial for three reasons. First, it overturns a 30 year old 'basic tenet' of NATO policy on logistics. According to the official publication, *NATO Facts and Figures*, 'each nation is responsible for the continuing support of its forces'. Neither the USUKLOC change, nor the reasons for agreeing to it, have been mentioned in Defence White Papers, or reported to or debated in Parliament.

Secondly, all the costs of the new agreement would fall on the UK. The USUKLOC plan dramatically extends the arrangement whereby Britain already provides over a hundred military bases and facilities to the Americans free of charge in its role as the US's 'unsinkable aircraft carrier'.

Under the terms of the agreement, Britain would use special Emergency Powers Laws (see *NS* last week) to provide US forces with impressed British civilian labour; requisition and hand over civilian supplies, including food, fuel, building materials, transport and construction equipment; and empty NHS hospitals of their patients to prepare for US military casualties.

The Ministry of Defence admitted this week that the USUKLOC Agreement exists, but refused to discuss its terms beyond saying that the agreement 'covers the logistic arrangements to support the US requirements in the event of the need to reinforce Europe.'

Since the basic Memorandum of Understanding on USUKLOC was signed, US-British working parties have been developing detailed plans to implement the agreement. More than 7 major plans and 30 subsidiary technical understandings have already been agreed and distributed ready for use. The plans set out exactly which British resources will be supplied to meet a detailed list of US requirements, submitted in 1984, for the main 60-day reinforcement period. It covers everything from cooking equipment to tank engine maintenance.

Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, formerly the Joint Director of Military Operations for the US European Command and now Deputy Director of the Washington-based Centre for Defense Information, told the *New Statesman* this week that impressed civilian labour was a major requirement in US joint logistic planning. He explained: 'My understanding was that there were . . . work allocations, quotas to be met by the host nation'. The quotas specified groups who would be sent to shipment centres, to storage sites, or to maintenance facilities.

The special labour force would not be an orthodox military reserve, Admiral Carroll explained, but ordinary civilians. Depending on political decisions to be taken by the British government, he explained, unemployed people and ordinary workers could be conscripted at employment offices. 'You are obviously going to have a measure where people are taken out of activities like football matches and arcades . . . [and directed into] what is laughingly called constructive efforts, helping with the war'.

MOST IMPORTANT of the plans which have followed the signing of the USUKLOC Agreement is the 'Joint Logistic Plan' (JLP). It describes how specific civil airports, seaports, army camps and requisitioned civilian transport resources will be made available to US forces. These include bus and truck fleets and their drivers.

A separate, earlier agreement says that twelve major Royal Air Force bases will also be turned over to the US Air Force. This 'Colocated Operating Base (COB)' Agreement is now linked to the USUKLOC plan. The MoD said this week the 'we're prepared to acknowledge that [the COB Agreement] exists. It's a confidential arrangement.'

The JLP would be activated after Britain had mobilised and British troops had moved out of Army camps to West Germany — itself a gigantic manoeuvre, twice exercised recently. But the next stage has never been exercised — the arrival of more than 100,000 Americans within ten days. The main US arrival areas

White & Reed

**Joan Ruddock, CND chair, called last week on the British nuclear weapons factory at Burghfield to ask how she and other neighbouring residents would fare under secret emergency powers**



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would be Barry and south Wales, Liverpool and the Mersey, and Greenock and the Clyde.

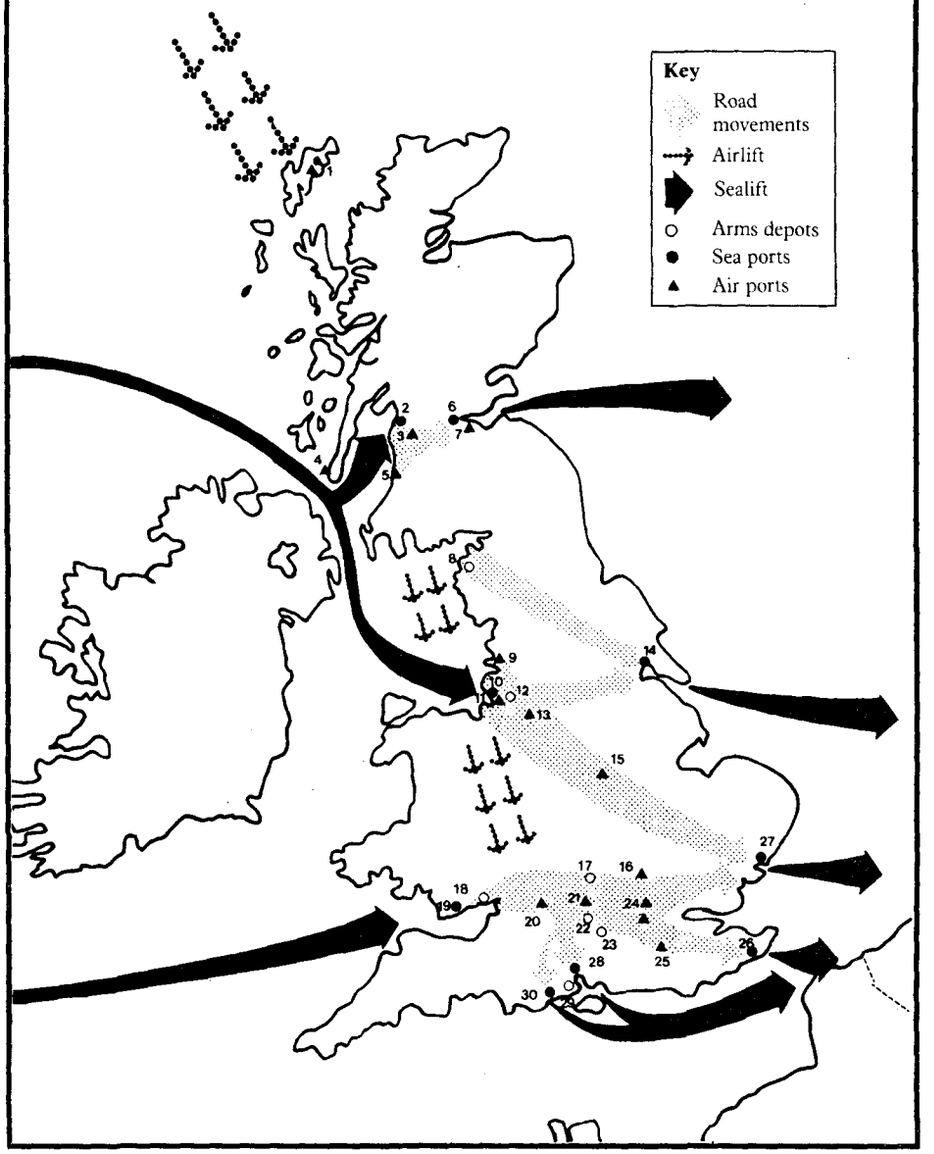
After mobilisation, munitions would be moved eastwards from depots like Caerwent, Bramley and Broughton Moor. From east coast ports, they would be shipped to the continent, or loaded on board US warships.

Some US troop transports would fly straight to Germany, but most would stop at least temporarily in the UK. European airfields cannot receive the hundreds of daily requisitioned Boeing 747 flights required. For example, an entire reserve division — 18,000 men — will arrive in the Merseyside area. The division's complete equipment is stockpiled at Burtonwood nearby.

According to one senior RAF officer, the planned scale of US reinforcment operations is 'enormous'. He identified some of the civil airports to be used by United States forces: 'Prestwick, Turnhouse, Manchester Ringway, Blackpool and Liverpool Speke, to name but a few'. The newly built and NATO-funded airport at Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides would provide additional staging facilities.

NEGOTIATIONS TO HAND over these extensive resources to the US military, even before war had been declared, have been underway for almost 10 years. The first US requests were for ammunition storage depots. As a consequence, in about 1978, two major British ammunition dumps were emptied of British stocks. Comprehensive new demands

## US-UK LINES OF COMMUNICATION




1: **Stornoway**; 2: **Greenock**; 3: **Abbotsinch**; 4: **Machrihanish**; 5: **Prestwick**; 6: **Grangemouth**; 7: **Turnhouse**; 8: **Broughton Moor**; 9: **Blackpool**; 10: **Liverpool**; 11: **Speke**; 12: **Burtonwood**; 13: **Ringway**; 14: **Hull**; 15: **East Midlands**; 16: **Luton**; 17: **Bicester**; 18: **Caerwent**; 19: **Barry**; 20: **Lyneham**; 21: **Brize Norton**; 22: **Welford**; 23: **Bramley**; 24: **Heathrow**; 25: **Gatwick**; 26: **Dover**; 27: **Felixstowe**; 28: **Marchwood/Southampton**; 29: **Hythe**; 30: **Poole**

# NATO EMERGENCY POWERS

BRITAIN and Denmark alone of Nato's member states do not have some form of 'emergency powers legislation' either on their statute book, or written into a constitution.

**West Germany:** The Notstandsgesetze (Emergency Legislation) provide a comprehensive list of measures that a German government may take in a time of crisis — covering civil defence, control of utilities and civil liberties. These measures were agreed in 1968 under the CDU/SPD Kiesinger-Brandt government.

**Netherlands:** The Dutch Parliament in the 1984/5 session provided for 4 national 'emergency states' to be proclaimed by a Royal Decree in the event of a crisis — Increased Vigilance, Exceptional Circumstances, War and the Siege.

**Norway:** In 1950 Parliament passed a series of 'Special measures for warlike situations'.

**Canada:** The War Measures Act of 1914 comes into force when 'war, invasion or insurrection real or apprehended exists.' As originally drafted, it gave the government power to make regulations on a wide range of issues without reference to parliament, but a modifying bill was passed in 1960 and this right is now conditional on the Canadian parliament accepting that any of the above emergencies exists.

**Belgium:** There is no exact peacetime counterpart to the British legislation revealed in last week's *NS*, but there is a complex set of regulations already on the statute book providing for wartime.

**Greece:** Article 48 of the 1975 constitution allows the President (via decrees countersigned by the Prime Minister) to suspend certain clauses of the Constitution relating to civil liberties in times of war, mobilisation, or any serious threat to public order. Parliament must be convened within 30 days to ratify his actions.

**United States:** Legislation codified in 1976 ensures that when the President declares a national emergency, or Congress declares war, all subsequent significant orders of the President must be transmitted to Congress promptly and a record kept of them by the President.

**Portugal:** The 1982 constitution (Clause 141, item 1) states that the President may not declare a state of siege or emergency without first obtaining the consent of the National Assembly, or its standing committee if the Assembly is not in session.

**Iceland:** Article 28 of the Constitution allows the President to issue exceptional laws in time of crisis.

**Spain:** Article 116 of the 1978 Constitution states that 'organic law' shall regulate the varying states of alarm, emergency, and siege. The law, passed in 1981, ensured that both the Congress and the Cabinet would ratify this state of emergency, specifying the areas of Spain so affected, and that this state could last for only 30 days.

**Turkey:** The State of Emergency Laws (1980) govern the period of transition between normal law and martial law. A decision to introduce a State of Emergency rests with the National Assembly.

**Italy:** As with Belgium, there are no formal equivalents to the British laws. However, Article 77 of the 1948 Constitution allows the government to introduce decrees which have the full force of law for 60 days (prior to ratification by parliament) in 'exceptional cases of urgency'.

**France:** Article 36 of the 5th Republic's constitution allows the Council of Ministers to declare a state of siege, which may not last longer than 12 days. Article 35 provides for the declaration of war by the President.

**Luxembourg:** Provision for emergencies is made in the constitution.



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were made in 1980. The United States wanted Europeans to provide direct support for US reinforcement plans and started negotiating in each NATO country for 'Wartime Host Nation Support' (WHNS) Agreements.

A WHNS Agreement was signed with West Germany on 15 April 1982. Reaching agreement with the British took a bit longer. A Congressional committee was warned in March 1983 not to probe too closely into the 'sensitive and fluid' negotiations.

The eventual USUKLOC agreement has been kept highly classified. In marked contrast, the US-German WHNS agreement was immediately published. Copies were given to the press — including TASS, the Soviet news agency. An appendix promised the US the services of some 93,000 civil and military personnel, plus unspecified further impressed civilian transport resources.

A Belgian-US WHNS agreement was signed — in October 1981. The Dutch-US agreement followed in August 1982. The Norwegian and Danish governments have refused to grant US forces such sweeping rights. But, after a lengthy public and parliamentary debate, a limited US-Norwegian 'pre-positioned storage agreement' was reached in October 1982. Only the UK has kept its agreements entirely secret.

UP TO 30 LARGE HOSPITALS would be ordered to discharge their patients in order to receive US military casualties. We have established that they are general hospitals with between 400 and 1000 beds each. At least three of them are in Scotland; and at least six in the north of England.

Health department officials do not deny the hospital emptying plans. They say that 'plans are being made to deal with such events, should they ever arise. But we can't go any further'. In London, the DHSS said that 'There's not much I can tell you. Its not our policy to reveal what these plans are.' According to our sources these plans are 'desperately politically sensitive'. Medical staff and hospital administrators have until now been unaware of their provisions.

The plans have also been kept secret from health service civil defence planners, whom the government insisted be appointed four years ago. Their task was to convince doctors and public alike — despite the findings of a major BMA report on the effects of nuclear war — that a medical response to a future war is worthwhile. The revelation that the government has been deceiving its own emergency planners about its intentions in time of crisis is likely further to reduce the credibility of government civil defence plans.

It has not yet been finally resolved whether draft Emergency Powers regulations should be written to compel doctors and nurses to stay at their posts to deal with US casualties. The alternative is for US medical reservists to be flown in from hospitals in the United States.

THE USUKLOC AGREEMENT and accompanying JLP facilities are a highly sensitive subject inside Whitehall. Senior officials argue that, once mobilisation has taken place, there will be 'three times as many American forces as British' in the UK. There would be 'no time to argue' about mistakes.

Challenged that their criticism might be primarily anti-American in spirit and tone, they say that Whitehall's experience of negotiating with US military officials in the UK has done little to allay prejudices that might have been held about 'gum-chewing rednecks'.

In a developing crisis, US control over logistic resources would be strengthened, as reserves were flown in from the United States. Guards in 'Ground Defence Areas' around US bases would be expected to deal with local British residents who were unwilling to leave the area or hand their homes over for military use or demolition, as required. Protesters and anti-war demonstrators would be 'swept off' any roads that they attempted to block.

The strength of the US Air Force Security Police in the UK is planned to double to 3650. They would 'assume air base defense duties in time of crisis' — including 'off-base defensive positions', according to US Congressional hearings in 1982.

The USUKLOC Agreement also provides for emergency amendment to the US-British Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), extending the legal powers and immunities of US service personnel. We have not been able to obtain details of the agreed alterations, but a draft NATO-area emergency SOFA, prepared by US European Command, would give US troops extraordinary powers:

> Should the US military commander consider that the [UK] Government does not possess the capability of quelling [disorders which may materially affect the mission or security of the US forces] effectively or in time, the US Forces may take such action as the US military commander deems necessary, either unilaterally or in co-operation with the Government . . .
>
> No civil action shall be brought in the courts against any member of the US Forces . . . The authorities of the US shall have the exclusive right to exercise criminal jurisdiction . . .

US National Guard forces are also included in reinforcement and guard plans for Europe. Although these units are organised by the individual US states in peacetime, they can be mobilised as part of the Federal US Army reserves by Presidential executive order. Official permission was given for some 840 National Guards to conduct exercises in Britain last September. More will be back in Britain later this year. But the 1984 National Guard exercise was given no official publicity, in striking contrast to this week's home defence exercise, Brave Defender. The MoD admitted six months later that the Guardsmen had been rehearsing 'NATO war roles'.

Inspecting manoeuvres during exercise Brave Defender last weekend, Secretary of State Michael Heseltine did not dispute that new Emergency Powers, allowing the grant of special rights to US military commanders, had indeed been prepared. They were 'legislative options', he suggested, which would be a 'matter for Parliament and the government of the day to consider'.

But Liberal Front Bench spokesman Paddy Ashdown said that although 'if we stay in NATO we must play host to some American forces', he was 'alarmed. We are allowing US troops and their commanders unheard of powers.' Labour Front Bench spokesperson Denzil Davies said that 'the matter should have been put before Parliament. We are after all an adult democracy.' □

BIRMINGHAM

# THIS ISN'T A RIOT — IT'S A WAR

**Beneath the calm exterior, Handsworth has been seething for ten years. Why did the lid come off? DEREK BISHTON reports**

THERE IS A marker board in Howard Reid's office which says: 'The problem — 100 per cent unemployment. The solution . . .' The column has been left blank, inviting answers. Reid's office is part of a project set up to find alternatives to custody for young black offenders. It is situated right in the heart of the area devastated by fire during Monday night's events in the Handsworth/Lozells district of Birmingham which left four people dead.

'This is not a riot,' insists Reid, who is black himself. 'This is a war. I'm sorry about those people who died but in a war you must expect casualties. The media has been duped by the police into thinking that everything was alright in Handsworth. Now you can see for yourself what a lie that is.'

Reid's project handles a case load of 400; all young, all black — and all unemployed since they left school. But they are just the tip of the iceberg in an area which has been ravaged by inner city decline. As far as Reid, and many others in Handsworth are concerned, guerrilla warfare is not only a legitimate tactic, it is probably the only tactic left.

Handsworth has been at the centre of the debate about inner-city decline, unemployment, and policing methods since the mid 1970s when street crime — muggings — focussed attention on the unemployment of young blacks and police methods of dealing with them. Out of the turmoil was born the concept of community policing, an initiative designed to integrate the white police into the multi-cultural society they policed. After the 1981 riots, when Handsworth escaped relatively lightly, many observers, including Lord Scarman, saw evidence that it was working.

But policing methods cannot change the economy. And it is significant that the area went up in flames only a day after the Handsworth carnival ended — a carnival supported and encouraged by the police.

The community policing initiative 'worked' only as long as inner-city partnership funds stretched to prop everything up. This year, government cuts have reduced funds for projects under the partnership to a maximum of £15,000 each, a ludicrously inadequate amount. This has come at the same time as the abolition of West Midlands County Council which also supported many initiatives for the young



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Both photos: Derek Bishton

**Take away the funds that prop up the tottering communities, and that's that for community policing**

unemployed. Now the future viability of the scores of voluntary projects in the area is seriously in doubt. It is these projects which have undoubtedly kept the lid on Handsworth for the past ten years.

On Tuesday afternoon, as the world's media poured down Lozells Road, the message coming from the MPs, councillors, community leaders, and community members assembled to meet them was essentially the same. 'You can explain it in three words,' said Clare Short, whose Ladywood constituency covers Handsworth. 'Employment, employment, employment.'

Afro-Caribbean and Asian leaders stood together in solidarity in front of the cameras to deny the rumours flying around which suggested that this was a black-Asian conflict. Asian shops had been hit, yes, but that was not the point because Asian youths had been among the crowd, and anyway, all the shops — symbols of consumer goods denied to them — are owned by Asians. Nor was this just a group of looters out for a lark, although they, of course, were there too. No, this was serious.

THE DISTURBANCES were sparked off when police tried to arrest a young black man for an alleged parking offence outside the Villa Road pub. The area has recently been in the news because of complaints from a residents' association about drug dealing outside the pub. A public meeting ended in uproar last Thursday when a black leader was threatened by white residents.

The word 'drug' has become an increasingly emotive term since the anti-heroin campaign got under way and many residents cited the presence of young blacks selling ganja as visible evidence of their legitimate concern. That's where the issue starts to get cloudy, because the majority of young men selling on the street deal only in ganja, or marijuana. The Rastafarian belief in the 'holy herb', which influences this group, means that drugs such as cocaine and heroin are frowned upon. For many, selling ganja is the only way they earn money because they do not sign on the dole. The youth, therefore, saw this stigmatisation as drug dealers as yet more evidence of the discrimination — the pressure — they face, and have always faced in post-industrial England.

As TV crews and journalists started turning up to cover the drug story tension spread throughout the whole area, adding more drama to what was already an explosion — a release — of aggressive energy. One youth I spoke to said: 'Every night on the TV you see how the black youth is fighting back in South Africa against apartheid. The same thing is going on here man. So we must fight back.'

It's the kind of situation where the internal conflicts often obscure the real issue. The young do have a legitimate grievance. But so, too, do the other residents, many of whom are black and deeply ashamed of the image that ganja projects about Afro-Caribbean life-styles. They point out that the presence of ganja sellers inevitably criminalises an area, and attracts outsiders selling hard drugs.

At the same time, a city housing policy which has dumped scores of psychiatric outpatients in the vicinity, many of whom have drug and alcohol related disorders, has contributed to the overwhelming feeling that Handsworth is becoming a human scrapyard, divested of dignity, hope and the resources to make anything better.

THIS IS THE gut feeling of nearly everyone I spoke to. Eric Crooks, a Jamaican in his 60s, said: 'I came over here to serve in the RAF during the last war. I've worked all my life to help build up this country. But what are they offering our youth? Nothing. If I was their age I'd be doing the same thing.' The Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, made a flying visit to the fire zone on Tuesday. After a brief attempt at a walk-about he came under a hail of missiles and was whisked away. He probably wished he was back in Northern Ireland. One man in the crowd shouted after him: 'You see that? He's scared. But he's got to be because those kids aren't afraid of prison. They've got nothing to be afraid of because they've got nothing worth living for.'

And amidst all the horror at the loss of life, and the misgivings about the damage, estimated on Tuesday at more than £2 million, there is a strong feeling that Handsworth, in trying to find something worth living for, might also provide a graveyard for Thatcherism. □

*Derek Bishton works in Handsworth and is the author of* Home Front, *a book about Handsworth, published last year.*

PLANNING

# BUILDERS SCHEME TO BUST THE BELTS

## The hot eyes of builders on Green Belts threaten the achievement of years reports STEPHEN JOSEPH

THE GREEN BELTS, the zones restricting development round British cities, are under attack. Nine big builders, including household names (in every sense) like Barratt, Bovis and Wimpey, are planning 15 'New Country Towns' in the countryside around London. In doing so, they've brought to the boil a huge Conservative Party row over Green Belts which threatens to produce parliamentary and constituency revolts.

Some 6,600 square miles in Britain (in practice England) are covered by Green Belts. London got its first Green Belt in 1938, inspired by the work of Ebenezer Howard and the Garden Cities movement. With urban post-war planning laws this was expanded and many other cities followed suit, especially after a 1955 circular from the Housing Minister which set out the aims of Green Belts. These were: to check the growth of large towns; to prevent neighbouring towns from merging; and to protect some towns' special character. As a positive concept in an essentially negative planning system, Green Belts became demonstrably popular, particularly with those who lived in or near them, and during the 1970s Green Belts were codified and confirmed in the county structure plans.

The housebuilders' case for breaching the Green Belts is simple. They allege shortage of land for new housing. This shortage is put down to urban local councils not parting with city land for development and to rural councils allowing too little housing in their structure plans and designating Green Belts indiscriminately. They cite new population projections showing that towards the end of the century there will be a greater number of households, which will be smaller in size.

Rather than increasing the number of dwellings by urban sprawl or by massive additions to existing towns, they propose to concentrate urban growth in the new country towns. They would be made to look green and pleasant, the builders would provide health, education and leisure facilities and other infrastructure free to local authorities and workspaces would be included so they wouldn't be just another commuter town.

MUCH OF this argument is disputed by conservationists and planners. SERPLAN, the standing conference of South East planning authorities, concluded on the basis of



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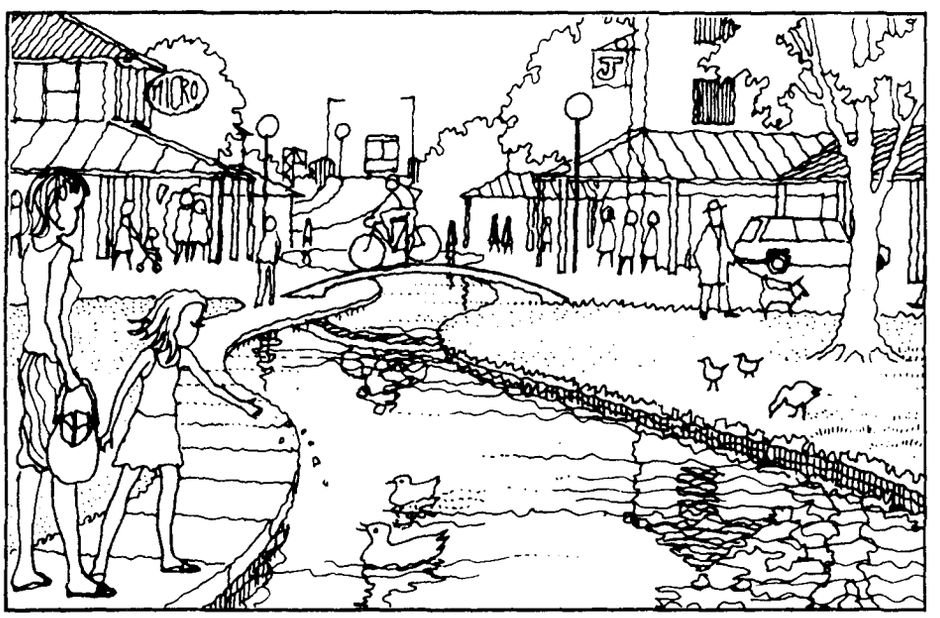
December 1984 government figures that the planned supply of housing land in the South East would match demand, at least to 1991. But new DoE figures released in March increased the previous predictions of 1991 household numbers by more than one third, providing more support for the housebuilders' case.

Conservation groups were suspicious of this sudden increase and denounced the 'political' assumptions underlying the statistics of growth in the South East at the expense of the North. They and SERPLAN want much more 'infilling' in existing towns and in London — one Newham survey found sites for housing between 3000 and 5000 people — and more balanced development between North and South. As Greater Manchester's deputy planning officer Chris Shepley told a planners' conference in May, 'anyone can have a glamorous and profitable time building trendy new villages in the leafy Essex green belt, but so far as your average long-term unemployed, increasingly bitter and resentful northern teenager is concerned, they may as well be on the moon'.

But New Country Towns in the South East *are* more profitable for developers than infilling in London or providing housing for northern teenagers. At least the towns are better suited to meet the needs of the big housebuilders and the property markets, if not the public. Big is profitable — comparable urban sites to those in the Green Belt could only be created by 'bringing back the bulldozers' to cities, a tactic now deplored for having replaced community slums on the human scale with alienated slums. In central and inner London, it's more profitable to build offices than housing; only GLC intervention against commercial pressures has retained and built new housing in Covent Garden and Waterloo. Elsewhere in London it's superstores and warehouses that elbow housing out of the land market.

Added to these pressures pushing developers towards the Green Belt are the really sizeable profits to be gained from changing the zoning category of a site. Currently the land round Tillingham Hall in Essex, the first site proposed for a New Country Town, is zoned for agricultural use and sells for around £70,000-£80,000 an acre. Once approved for urban use, it would be worth between £200,000 and £300,000 an acre, a profit on the 760 acres of between £100m and £175m (and its proximity to the new M25 motorway could increase this). These expected profits are integral to the developers' offer of a high quality environment and free infrastructure which makes the New Country Towns so attractive.

Not surprisingly, the developers are prepared to spend a lot to get their way. Tom Baron, chair of Christian Salvesen Properties and one of the key figures in the builders' consortium, told the Council for the Protection of Rural England's magazine *Countryside Campaigner* that 'we are prepared to spend £½m on getting each of the villages (new country towns) through planning appeals'. None of the profit would come to the government through Development Land Tax — it was abolished last year.



**Developers peddle a vision of a pastoral idyll in their plans for the New Country Towns — in this case Tillingham Hall — but there's little in it for the urban poor**

UNBUCKLING THE Green Belts will exacerbate conflict inside the Conservative Party. Builders are most generous contributors to Tory Party funds — and expect a return on their donations. As Tom Baron put it,'it's the financial muscle at the end of the day. We spend enough to get anybody elected'. And normally the government would smile on such an example of the free market and private enterprise in action. But on the other side, Conservative activists in Green Belt constituencies have been making it clear to their MPs, in terms that would draw howls of protest if used by Labour parties, that they are expected to oppose any assault on Green Belts. This pressure, skilfully fostered by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), led in 1983 to the withdrawal of a draft government circular which would have loosened the Green Belts. It was replaced by a circular affirming support for it. Subsequently there has been support for the Belts from the all-party Commons Environment Committee, from the Bow Group and from numerous Tory MPs faced with overwhelming constituency pressure.

Essex Tory MPs have already signalled opposition to Tillingham Hall and it is the decision on the public inquiry into this scheme which will show which side of the Tory party is in the ascendant.

Some suspect the motives of those opposing incursions into the Green Belt. Keith Waterhouse in the *Mirror* refused to defend the Green Belt because 'it seems to me that the countryside is nothing short of a great conspiracy, an exclusive secret society whose inhabitants fight tooth and claw to stop anyone else from joining'. The same line of argument has appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph*, which described Green Belt protectors as 'a reasonably well-housed electorate intent on preserving their own private views and property values'. Green Belts, after all, do not offer the urban poor a stretch of land for their leisure use.

THIS VIEW MIGHT attract some on the left, but it misses the point. The housebuilders are attacking not only the Green Belt, a zone of privilege for the rich, but the whole planning system and local democracy. They want central government to set housing figures for each local authority area, or at least to revise upwards the authorities' own figures in their structure plans. Already Lord Young's white paper on 'Lifting the Burden' suggests Simplified Planning Zones which could be proposed by groups of developers with the right of appeal to central government if the local council refused. All such proposals would weaken local control over allowing 'market forces' to skew land use away from people who need homes and jobs in favour of those who can make profits out of new building. Even if the Green Belts were to be relaxed, research by Martin Elsan from Oxford Polytechnic suggests that this would benefit rich outsiders rather than the local poor.

It is tempting for Labour to enter a 'we can protect the Green Belt best' contest, as the Alliance has already begun to. On its own, though, this would not address the underlying problems of housing and land policies. What's required are positive policies to direct housing investment to the groups and areas where it's most needed, allied to controls on land prices and markets. There are a number of ways to do this, including more funding for public housing (cut by 69 per cent since 1979-80), controlling office development, controlling second homes, reserving rural housing for locals, reintroducing development land taxes and 'positive planning', where the community has a voice in what should be built as well as what shouldn't.

But allied to this Labour needs a positive policy for the Green Belts to realise the dreams of their originators, who wanted them to provide pleasure and leisure for the cities they surround. This could mean: developing new education facilities for city children, like the Park Lodge Farm run by the GLC; new Country Parks and other leisure facilities; more public rights of access; more public transport to the Belts; new smallholdings and allotments; reclaiming more derelict land; and management of the belts to promote nature conservation. All this should be overseen by strategic elected authorities, which could also create new 'green wedges' and 'green corridors' within cities to extend the countryside to them. □



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# RETREAD OF FOOT WITH A POLICY OF PLOD

**If the others make enough mistakes, Kinnock may just win office. But what on earth would he do with it, asks ANTHONY BARNETT**

Andrew Ward/Report

**Kinnock — good at producing smiles, but what about ideas?**

IN THE RUN UP to a general election there may be tactical arguments for everyone on the Left to 'button their lips'. With a good two years to go, however, and a short two weeks to Labour's conference, now is the time to debate Kinnock's approach. For so far, when it comes to strategy, Labour's leader seems to vacillate between the stupifyingly vague and the utterly pragmatic.

In discussion with Eric Hobsbawm, Kinnock said, 'If you want a general phrase that defines our objective it is to produce in plenty and distribute in justice'. Which tells us precisely nothing. Kinnock's press office has high regard for this passage from his introduction to Nye Bevan's *In Place of Fear*:

> Collective action is the most satisfying and practical means of safeguarding liberty, allocating economic resources, conserving raw materials and natural assets, maximizing productive potential, advancing international peace and domestic security and enabling mankind to control its world by trust, knowledge, brotherhood and planning instead of fear, ignorance, conquest and rapaciousness.

Sleep inducing stuff. Or take his main address to the 1983 Party conference, after he won the leadership:

> Patriotism of peace, care, justice, liberation, confidence, efficiency — that is today's patriotism and this labour movement is made up of today's people who borrow nothing from nostalgia.

It was a theme he returned to last year on the Jimmy Young show. His lack of experience in office, did not matter, Kinnock said: 'The most important thing is to be modern — to be of this age, for this age.'

Only the smell of power seems to bring the edge into Kinnock's voice. Interviewed in *Tribune* before he won the leadership, he stated:

> Let me give you the central philosophical attitude, if that's what it can be called. I'm in favour of the Labour Party winning and I'm in favour of everything being done by everybody in the party to subscribe to that end. And it therefore means that where actions and the taking of attitudes conflict with that purpose of victory, then I can be a very difficult man to deal with.

This was also the note he struck in his recent speech to the Durham Miners' Gala. Nothing must be said or done to jeopardise votes. Particularly by the Left. In a 1982 interview with the *Morning Star* Kinnock attacked those who,

> say 'Better no Labour Government than one like the last one.' That self-indulgence infuriates me . . . They are willing to condemn millions of people to unemployment, bad housing . . .

To which those whom he criticizes would doubtless reply that it *was* the last Labour government which introduced mass unemployment and condemned people to monetarism, and that what they want is a *different* sort of Labour government.

The polarization — and it is one Kinnock himself has encouraged — is quite frustrating. It is evident that a shopping list of militant demands will get nowhere electorally. It does not follow that the only outcome of an election victory must be to return to traditional Labour government. True, Kinnock is not from the old PLP machine. Rather, he was the chosen successor and the favourite song of Foot. According to Kinnock's biographer, Robert Harris, in summer 1982 (i.e. after the Falklands War) Foot 'made up his mind that when he relinquished the leadership he would try to do so in circumstances as propitious for Kinnock as possible.' This is the key to understanding Kinnock. He is a modernized, video version of

## This England

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☐ Soldiers serving in the Falklands are so short of blank ammunition for training exercises they shout 'bang, bang' when they pull the trigger. — *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (Vin Arthey)

☐ A crowd of 25,000 people will gather in the Staffordshire countryside later this month to watch a troupe of 12 earth diggers perform to the tune of Tchaikovsky's 'Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy'. — *Sunday times* (James Scott)



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his predecessor. Like him he is personable, rhetorical and vague. Neil Kinnock is Michael Foot without the walking stick or Hampstead ambience.

IT IS A venerable tradition, Britain an instinctively conservative society, so Kinnock could well win office — certainly the scorn of intellectuals has yet to prove an electoral liability for a politician. Kinnock's supporters insist that unlike Michael Foot Kinnock is not a man of opposition, rather he has a genuine will to win: an important difference.

Given Thatcher's record he ought to win office easily. To measure the likelihood of success we need comparisons. Wilson in 1964 does not fit: first because he was the candidate of the Left not the centre, second because Wilson's cry of 'modernization' was radical even impatient, and third because it was his cunning rather than niceness which attracted the working class vote. Instead, we should compare Kinnock's campaign to contemporary victories: Reagan in America, Gonzalez in Spain.

'Reagan?', you might ask. Eight months ago Kinnock decided to assert his authority as party leader, according to the *Sunday Times*, which opened its account with Kinnock leaving a meeting in central London: 'he suggested that he be photographed against the hotel's Union Jack. "Look what the flag did for Reagan," he told his aides.' At the recent press conference to launch the joint TUC Labour Party manifesto on jobs and industry, *A New Partnership, A New Britain*, Kinnock pointed to Reagan's reflation as a model. To be sure, the 'nice guy' appeal may attract voters, but fate — or rather capital — is unlikely to smile on Kinnock as it has so far favoured the President.

A less implausible model then, is that of the younger European social democrats such as Gonzalez or in a different way Craxi in Italy; stylish ameliorators who are pro-American nationalists in a European context. One problem for Kinnock is that David Owen or even David Steel are much more likely candidates to win a race to become Britain's chief Euro-moderate. For a start the Alliance leaders are not encumbered by trade union connections. This means they are more 'modern — of this age'. Also, one of the functions of the new wave of European socialism has been to isolate and cauterize the Euro-communists. In contrast Kinnock praises Gramsci and sits at Hobsbawm's knee.

The international models are not auspicious. But Kinnock's instincts are anyway domestic. In 1979 Callaghan ran as a Baldwinite Conservative in the belief that the 'woman' would make a mistake and deliver him a mandate. Instead she won with considerable support from trade unionists, with the backing, in other words, of workers who wanted change. The phenomenon of 'Bennism' and the frustration it expressed are only comprehensible when this is recalled. Nonetheless, Kinnock seeks a return to the Callaghan approach when he relies upon the now massive and surely irreversible revulsion against Thatcherism. Yet this leaves the initiative in Thatcher's hands and, more important these days, places Kinnock in a contest with the Alliance on its own chosen ground — against 'extremism'.

*Stefano Cagnoni/Report*

**Look what acting did for Reagan — maybe singing'll do it for me**

The result at Brecon and Radnor was illuminating. It was Kinnock's home country and he was confident of victory, yet his compatriots failed to trust him when they flocked away from Thatcher. Kinnock blamed Scargill but he has only himself to blame for getting into this position. Early in the miners' strike he refused to argue that there needed to be a ballot for the miners to win, saying it was not his job to tell the miners what to do. But if he was to exercise political leadership of the 'labour movement' then it *was* his job to spell out the political facts and to criticise Scargill, all be it from the left. Instead, he leaked disparaging remarks and when he was attacked for lack of solidarity pointed to the passages of support for the miners in his speeches. He gave Scargill the high ground.

I do not doubt the seriousness of Kinnock's desire to move in to No 10. The point is not the will for power but the wisdom to bend what power there is in one direction or another. Kinnock wants to replace confrontation with 'co-operation', the old consensus in a friendly guise. He *really* wants this, he believes that it represents what is best about Britain in his experience, and who can doubt that Thatcher has made life on this island worse. Thus Kinnock does not object to debate merely because he fears arguments or policies as such. He regards division as an electoral liability that makes a Party seem 'unfit to govern', and anyway he wishes to project Labour as the conductor of national accord rather than Thatcher style discord. To date, the promise of 'Kinnockism' is: 'Normal service will be resumed'. But it won't be because it can't be.

WHAT IS THE alternative to Kinnock's approach, given the string of defeats suffered by the Left so far this decade? The impact of the hard right has delivered some fierce lessons for socialists, but also one that should be welcome. People want to control their own lives in so far as they can. In these circumstances a respectable reformism would offer change both economic and institutional that can help to empower people outside parliament, women most of all — a programme that joins immediate defensive repairs to the ravages of the last ten years with a strategic momentum for the next decade.

There is no sign of any such approach. On jobs, for instance, Kinnock is reluctant to 'play the numbers game'. All he will say is that Labour's reflation will create a million jobs in the first two years of office. Last month the official *Gazette* of the Department of Employment predicted an increase in the labour force of more than 800,000 by 1991. In other words a million new jobs are needed just to keep the unemployment figures from *rising*.

Or take the example of nuclear weapons. If Labour gains a majority of seats in the next Parliament and rids the UK of all nuclear weapon systems,British and US, within five years, I'll be happy to eat a large portion of humble pie. It is not that I doubt Kinnock's sincerity. It is just that I read how the Embassy decided it should get to know him in 1982: 'The Americans concluded that Kinnock was a bright, shrewd politician with a high learning curve, who was definitely "educable" about the constraints he would face in office.' (*The Times* 16 March 1984) As New Zealand has discovered, it is the United States that needs educating. This will need preparation outside Parliament.

For all its limitations, the GLC experience showed that risk-taking may pay electorally, that people want socialism that is enabling rather than stifling. Against this Kinnock's approach is to gather the anti-Thatcher sentiment into a negative rather than a positive coalition. This is the meaning of his call, at Durham, to 'watch' every word, action and even attitude, because the voters need 'convincing'. But what is it that they are to be convinced of, if nothing controversial to be said?

Kinnock's calculation is that as a majority already want Thatcher out, all that stands between him and power is a segment of middle voters who need to be convinced that Labour will not be worse. Thus he seeks to shush anything that might 'lose' Labour the votes he needs to win. What about Ireland? Hush. What about jobs: terrible, but don't say it too loudly. What about the bomb: awful, we *all* think so except Mrs Nasty. Poor voters, nothing should be done to alarm them further or to impede a mass conversion to Labour based upon fear of the she-devil

Neil Kinnock regards ideas as divisive. He once wrote that the alternatives are: 'Socialism by prescription or socialism by plod. The former is all say and no do, all plans and no power . . . That leaves plodding. It is as dour an idea as can be found.' Plodding is not an idea at all, it is the abandonment of intelligent purpose for the so called good of the cause.

Thatcherism has been over-rated as an ideology, but it has made ideas important in British politics however ridiculous its own. Only an equivalent but more democratic stance will overcome Thatcherism, something that will necessarily be controversial. Plod alone is not the answer. Without such direction Labour may not hold the anti-Thatcher allegiance it has recently gained. Just as serious, even if it does and wins thanks to the disasters of Tory policy and the incoherence of the Alliance, Labour will again be humiliated by office. If Kinnock relies upon circumstances to give him power, he will find that he does not have the power to rise above the circumstances. □



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MEDIA

# News from Manhattan — that's entertainment

IT IS A cherished illusion of British television that we are the major innovators in broadcast news and current affairs. Not so; often the American networks get there before us, from title to format, to both good and bad effect. So the debut of a fresh way of packaging the news ought to be watched closely. It could happen here. CBS launched 'West 57th' in August for a limited run, to howls of execration from much of the press and from the associates of the late Ed Murrow, who is — in theory at least — still the standard by which CBS News should be judged.

'West 57th' tries to be a crossover. The racy name (from CBS's New York studios) suggests another fictional series set, this time, in a Manhattan TV company. Its opening titles maintain the fiction of fiction. Producers, directors and reporters bawl queries and commands at each other, intercut fast. Critics have been quick to point out the similarity to 'Miami Vice'. The reporters have the neatly assorted characteristics that could only have come from Central Casting.

All items on the show last for around seven minutes. There is a heavy emphasis on stories which have a media tie-in. Thus on the second edition of the programme there were reports on black singers of the Fifties long deprived of royalty payments for their work, and on teenagers who have broken into corporate computer codes. Both could be illustrated by video, of the disputed songs in performance for the former, of the film 'Tron' for the latter.

To be fair, the programme also turned in a 7-minute capsule on US aid for the Nicaraguan *contras*, showing the nature of the dirty war they are fighting, with frequent torture and slaughter of peasants thought to be sympathetic to the Sandinistas. The reporter, Jane Wallace, persistently questioned and cornered one of the *contra* commanders about the allegations. In this item the unswerving emphasis on the reporter as star and participant faded away with the strength of the material.

The item included just about everything you can say about the *contras* in seven minutes. And it is true that a more portentous British current affairs item might waste time setting up its subject. But seven minutes for everything is the television equivalent of fast food; everything reduced to the same finger-lickin' gobbets battered into shape. The programme's success in the ratings depends on its ability at 10pm to deter the viewers from

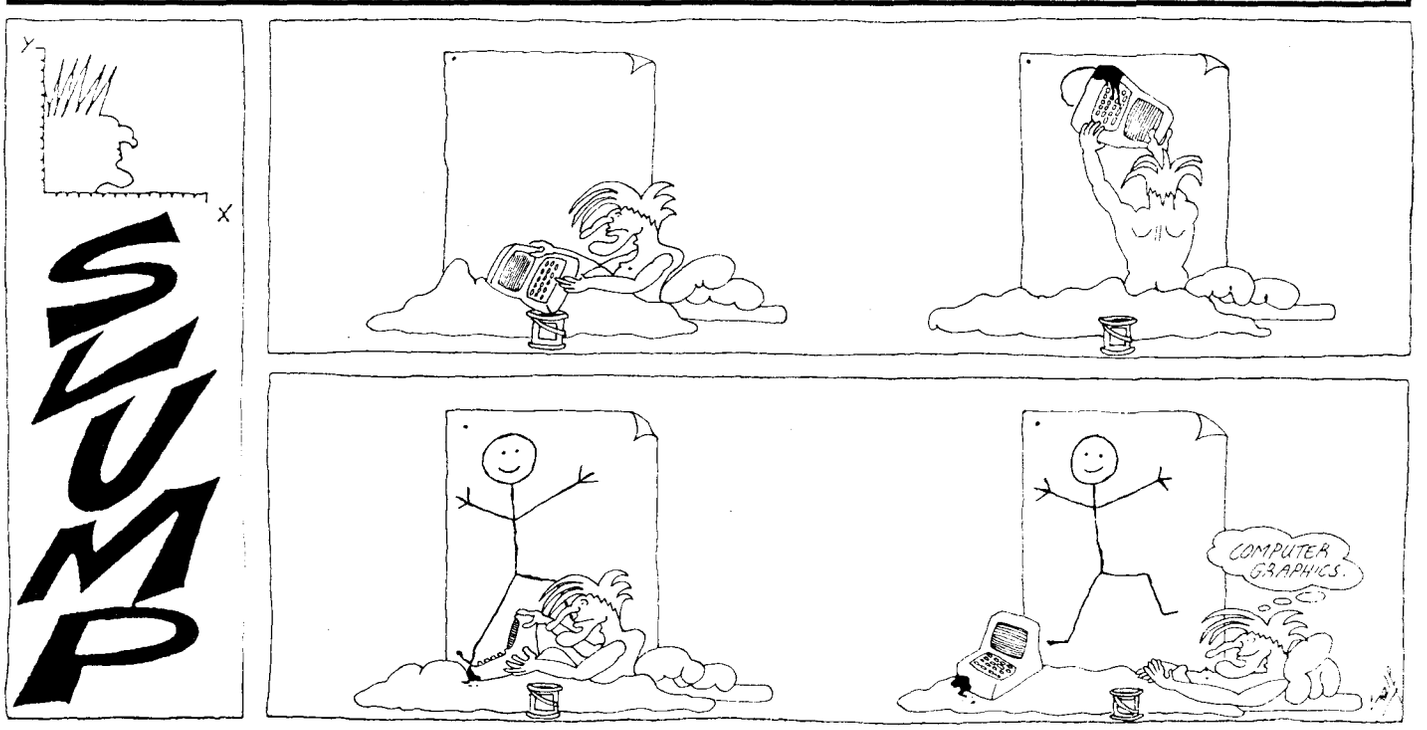
**PHILLIP WHITEHEAD**

an even blander diet. So the mix is showbiz. It depends for its success on how well it can blur the line between television entertainment and television reality. The viewer has to be lulled into thinking that he or she is watching a series about a television news team, rather than a real television news team.

American cinema has obliged in recent times by featuring the American reporter as hero, as a device to digest strong subjects which might otherwise be unpalatable for the audience. It has been a year of living vicariously. In the nastiest film released in New York this year, Cimino's 'Year of the Dragon', the avenging cop home from Vietnam who takes on the crime bosses of Chinatown (unsubtle message; he'd win this war, as he would have won in Nam, if only the politicians would let him) casts a Chinese girl reporter as his mistress and the butt of his racist abuse. Elsewhere fact and fiction merge. Woodward and Bernstein never recovered from seeing themselves played by Redford and Hoffman. Now Bernstein's wife has written a best-selling novel about his affair with a British reporter, which is to be filmed in its turn. If Streep plays the woman, will Dustin Hoffman get to play Bernstein again? Will the viewer be able to absorb these factoid products, and still have any sense of reality?

'West 57th' was attacked in the *New York Times* as 'a supermarket tabloid set to music'. Its producers defend it and say it will get harder and tougher if its easy style of personalised presentation brings in the ratings. The problem is that programmes like this cannot be weaned from their initial style. They depend on items that can use illustrative video, that have media entertainment links and — most of all — allow reporters to play themselves Hollywood-style instead of simply *being* themselves. Everything about the packaging of the show requires that they be stars, that there is an aureole of glamour and gossip about them. Ed Murrow was not too lofty to report on showbiz, but he became the story only when political attacks made him so — as in his memorable response to Joe McCarthy: 'I need no lessons in loyalty from the Junior Senator from Wisconsin.'

One such voice is heard within US television today. He speaks out against black-listing, and against US policies in Latin America. He is the nation's most watched journalist. Or rather he was. Ed Asner starred in 'Lou Grant', high quality soap about a Los Angeles newspaper office. Offstage he departed from script, was president of the actors' union. We won't be seeing 'Lou Grant' any more. The fact/fiction crossover doesn't work both ways. That is something else to be remembered when some bright spark appears in British TV newsrooms, babbling of the ratings which 'West 57th' has achieved, and advocating crossover styling here. We have been warned. □



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# DIARY

## Claudia Wright

*Washington*

Pomegranates arrived in the supermarket this week. I adore the fruit but it's always with deep misgiving that I see them appear every year at this time. They remind me of the end of summer, the looming winter — a season I associate with the return of the President to the White House, members of Congress to Capitol Hill and the revival of the sordid, violent passions the Reagan Administration has managed to make normal. You remember that, according to the ancient Greek myth, it was about this time of year that Persephone, who was also very fond of pomegranates, was seized by Pluto, the God of the Underworld, and carried below for his violent sexual delight. Demeter, her mother, finally prevailed on Pluto to release Persephone for part of every year, so long as she returned to him for the winter. This week there has been a string of days in the high 90s, but pomegranates in Washington in September mean the descent into the murk begins again.

○

One must make the best of it. For example, there is the little known spot in Washington where there is an eight foot high, thirty foot square mound of horse poop that is made available to all comers for free. The location — I pause for the obvious cracks — is behind the stables operated by the National Park Service about five miles from the White House. According to the middle-aged black man who oversees it, the pile has been accumulating for over 20 years and neither he nor I can explain why no local entrepreneur has cottoned on to the profits that lie there for the making. He recalled a retired Maryland police sergeant who used to fill up a small truck, bag the manure and sell it to local gardeners for $4 a bag. But he's dead now. A group called the Institute for Local Self-Reliance is trying to advertise the sale of the manure to help finance horse-riding lessons for retarded and crippled individuals; they have given it the marketable name of 'D. C. Doo'.

○

The celebration of Japan's surrender in 1945 has been the occasion for screening several fine Japanese films on the last days of the war and the first years of the allied occupation. The lesson appears to be that Americans seem to need the reassurance of old war victories, but learn little from them — the Japanese manage better insight and sense of humour about the Americans than is true in reverse. Early in one of the films that describes the arrival of US forces on an island in Japan's inland sea, some schoolboys are talking among themselves. 'Is it true', one asks wide-eyed, 'that the Yankees' dicks are as big as beer bottles?' Now it is well known that Japanese males have something of a fetish about the comparative size of their penises and it is understandable that in 1945 a group of boys might have imagined that the conquering Americans would have exaggerated proportions. But notwithstanding the fun the Japanese director was poking at Japanese thinking, the earthy joke didn't strike the mostly middle-aged male Washington audience as at all funny.

○

It should come as no surprise that a recent survey of the erotic preferences of American men and women should have cut the penis down to size, as it were — and that only the French would dare to publish the embarrassing results. A sample of American men was asked to say what parts of the male physique — eyes, torso, muscles, buttocks, 'well developed' penis — they thought women preferred. Twenty-one per cent said torso, 18 per cent said arm muscles, 15 per cent said penis. American women were then surveyed to see what they actually liked to look at. The penis was mentioned by only 2 per cent, muscles not at all; eyes attracted 11 per cent, and 39 per cent — by far the overwhelming favourite — chose men's buttocks. This is the key, I believe, to the 'gender gap', the well-known discrepancy between the way American men and women respond to President Reagan. It may also be a clue to the winner of the next presidential election. Forget the peace and war issue — there will be nothing to distinguish the Democrats from the Republicans. But beware the candidate with the slack arse.

○

If American men can't tell their fronts from their behinds, erotically speaking, I can't explain why fear of being penetrated should bother Reagan Administration officials so much more than predecessors like Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, who were driven by what I'd call a frontal castration complex. If these mental fantasies had a starting place, perhaps it was when T-10, the code name the FBI gave to Ronald Reagan in his Hollywood days, began as an FBI secret informer, naming people in the Screen Actors Guild as Communist sympathisers, at the same time as he claimed in public to be opposed to accusations of that kind. Soviet officials who were close to Yuri Andropov have noted ruefully how mild the American reaction has been to the recent disclosure of Reagan's secret past. One of them, who has just been in Washington for a conference on arms control, described how unpleasant he thought the US press had been in emphasising Andropov's role as director of the KGB. 'One might have supposed,' he added, speaking of Reagan, 'that being an informer to the secret police would be even more unpleasant.'

○

The lack of interest in Reagan's informing illustrates just how difficult it is for the denizens of Washington's murk to tell front from rear, light from dark, or the good empire from the evil one. Leslie Gelb is a *New York Times* reporter specialising in national security issues, who was a senior State Department official during the Carter Administration and who recently had a run in with a Reagan Administration successor. He ordered Gelb's picture removed from a State Department wall and accused him of disloyalty for printing information on US nuclear weapon deployments that Gelb had taken from foreign newspapers and cleared with the White House before printing. The *New York Times* cried 'McCarthyism!' The picture was put back and the Reagan man went on to another job. When Gelb was recently a guest on a television show, he was asked about Reagan's informing and whether he would reveal the name of a journalist he thought was a communist. Gelb answered: 'As a journalist, look, we'd have — we'd have to take some action. You'd — er — maybe — er — go and talk to your boss and whatnot.' If *New York Times* men think that political morality for today springs from their editor's desk, obliging them to do nothing but tow the line, how can you blame less sophisticated Washington folk for thinking that righteousness runs out of the Evil — oops — Oval Office?

# ROGER WODDIS

## Seat of government

*Councillors in Yeovil, Somerset, have just discovered that the underground bunker where they would spend 14 days after a nuclear attack has no lavatory*

In Yeovil, pearl of Somerset,
The forward-looking council met
  And talked the whole night through.
They drew up plans against the day
When things would fall apart and they
Were huddled in their hideaway,
  But overlooked the loo.

The chairman scratched his head and frowned:
'It's going to cost a pretty pound
To keep us cosy underground —
  But we deserve the best.'
They listed all the things they'd need,
Like booze and paperbacks to read,
And how few mouths they'd have to feed
  (too bad about the rest).

A hundred times they checked their stocks,
From torches to a first-aid box,
From peppermints to extra socks,
  And soap and paper towels.
Forgotten were evacuees
And councillors who, ill at ease,
Especially in times like these,
  Evacuate their bowels.



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French miners in the Lorraine coalfield: how much longer will it stay open?

Camera Press

# BRUSSELS HITS THE PITS

**The European Commission plans to close half Europe's mines by 1995. But, reports JOLYON JENKINS, the proposals aren't unanimous; some suspect a British plot**

IN MARCH documents leaked to the West German press revealed that the European Commission was planning to close half of what remains of the West European coal industry. Since then, the repeated postponement of publication of its proposals is evidence of deep division within the Commission over the plans.

Now, further internal Commission documents passed to the *New Statesman* show that it is frantically trying to put toothpaste back in the tube by making concessions that would help the West German coal industry while allowing the British to run down their own industry under the pretext of orders from Brussels.

The argument is over state subsidies to the coal industry. Under the 1952 Treaty of Paris, which set up the European Coal and Steel Community, subsidies to coal are illegal. But over the past 20 years, the prohibition has been honoured mainly in the breach. Because it has been thought politically desirable to have continuity of supply, all the coal producing countries — Germany, Belgium, France and Britain — have been allowed to give state aid to their industries.

Direct subsidies, in the form of deficit funding, have been the most important (apart from state payments to miners' pensions — see article overleaf). But there have been other ways of pushing money the way of the mining industries. For example, Germany makes payments to miners per shift — effectively an inducement to recruit; it also has an 'electricity from coal' act, which taxes electricity consumers and passes the money to the (privately owned) coal industry; and there is a similar compulsory subsidy from the steel industry.

The present situation is supposed to be governed by a resolution passed by the EEC Council of Ministers in 1976 and due to expire at the end of this year. Under its terms, governments are obliged to submit their aid plans to the Commission for prior approval. But, as the latest unpublished draft of the Commission's new proposals says, 'for political reasons, (governments) delay presenting estimates on the subsidies that will probably be necessary. The end result is that "prior approval" . . . is turned into retrospective regularisation. Such disregard for community provisions should not continue.'

The Commission proposed what it euphemistically called a 'restructuring' of the industry — cutting back domestic production and increasing imports from South Africa, Poland and Columbia. Over ten years, it wants virtually all the subsidies to be abolished. Under its plans 15 per cent of production would be lost almost immediately through pit closures, and up to a further 33 per cent of 'currently uneconomic' capacity would be lost in due course — the exact amount depending on the ability of pits to become 'economic', with investment subsidies being allowed only for this purpose.

In terms of job losses, the Commission reckoned on a total of 300,000 redundancies over five years, half from pit closures and half from 'knock-on' economic effects. And governments would have to submit all their aid proposals for advance approval. According to one Commission source, 'several Commissioners made the point that it would be quite out of the question to publish the document with those sort of figures in.' But before they could be taken out, the document was leaked.

In alarm, the Luxembourg Commissioner, Nicolas Mosar, who is in charge of the plan, sent a confidential memo to his colleagues. 'A conclusive revised version must be drafted, as quickly as possible,' he wrote. 'It is desirable to produce a more "nuanced" text to avoid charges of what wouldbetakenas"dirigisme".' A greater emphasis, according to Mosar, had to be put on the moral obligation of the Community to solve the 'humanitarian' issues raised.

The requirement to submit detailed subsidy plans in advance, Mosar wrote, 'is very sensitive. Although it doesn't appear in the text of the original proposals, they read between the lines and conclude that this means an obligation to submit precise details of closures for the next five years: this is the very nature of the scare that started the British miners' strike.'

The Mosar memo contains moves towards accommodation of German anxieties: 'The Commission could be in agreement to grant certain categories of aid. For example, the "Bergmannsprämie" (the German miners' subsidy) is not objected to as previously.'

Not surprisingly, later drafts of the proposals are more anodyne and conciliatory than the first. The German electricity from coal act is referred to not as a subsidy but as a 'para-fiscal measure' and 'not inconsistent with resolution 528' (the current rules). The German coking coal subsidy now seems negotiable and subsidies for carrying pit head stocks may be permitted.

BUT DESPITE the absence of figures, the effects would still be catastrophic. On a realistic estimate, the following entire coalfields would close:

**Britain:** Scotland, South Wales, the North East, Kent, West Lancashire and individual pits elsewhere.

**Germany:** Aachen, Lower Saxony, and —



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# IT'S FANTASY MONEY

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION's vision of a Europe awash with money saved from coal subsidies available for investment in 'sunrise industries' is a mirage. Most of the planned £6 billion saving is illusory and the costs in foreign exchange and in paying for unemployment make the scheme as potentially ruinous as the Common Agricultural Policy.

Nearly two thirds of the 'subsidy costs' are accounted for by the French, Belgian and German practice of counting state contributions to the pensions of retired miners as industrial aid. But these payments will have to be made whether coal is dug in future or not.

The only real savings would be from cutting subsidies to *current* coal production, which the Commission calculates as £2.4 billion in 1983. Even this is an overestimate, resulting from the discredited accounting practices of the NCB — we calculate that the true figure is nearer £1.98 billion. Closing the subsidised part of European production would save this money, but the resulting unemployment costs turn out to be greater than these savings.

As the Commission plan says, closing all the 'totally unproductive' pits would cost 300,000 jobs. If the full plan to cut *all* subsidised coal production was implemented — assuming, for the purposes of argument, the worst — then perhaps 500,000 jobs would go, adding half a percentage point to the EEC unemployment total of 11 per cent.

The Commission's coal import zealots assume that 'market forces' freed from distortions through state subsidies would then absorb these workers back into an expanding EEC economy. But this is contradicted by the Commission's own 1984-85 Annual Economic Report which states that 'a rate of growth of above the present short term trend of 2.5 per cent would be necessary to improve substantially the unemployment situation in the EEC'. Current Commission predictions for Community economic growth to the end of the 1990s are only around 2.6 per cent, hardly sufficient to reduce current levels of unemployment, never mind absorb half a million more.

These half million workers, generally concentrated in already socially and economically deprived areas, will cease to pay taxes, yet will have to be supported — by big increases in public spending. Assuming that some workers do find employment and that 400,000 net is added to the unemployment rolls, then multiplying this figure by a modest £6,000 public cost per job spent, we calculate increased public spending of some £2.4 billion per year — well in excess of the supposed £1.98 billion subsidy.

In fact the net cost of closure of EEC coal production is undoubtedly much higher. The costs of buying out miners' jobs and keeping them on the dole is usually greater than for other workers: probably around £7,500 in Britain and £10,000 in Germany. The real cost of the import plan might go as high as £9 billion a year.

Drawing on a recent investigation of the impact of coal closures in Germany by the prestigious Rhineland-Westphalian Institute for Economic Research, we calculate that the loss of even a third of German coal production would add 20 per cent to the Federal government's borrowing requirement.

The probable loss of the entire diminutive Belgian coal industry after the enforced withdrawal of subsidy would add 30 per cent to the Belgian budget deficit. In Britain the net addition to the PSBR could be more than £600 million a year.

But the most glaring anomaly in the coal import strategy is the Commission's failure to take into account the increased foreign exchange costs. The true increase in exchange costs would not just be the cost of extra coal to be imported. The present size of the internationally-traded coal market is actually quite small: less than 200 million tonnes in 1983.

Because such a small amount is traded, its price does not reflect current costs of production. Instead, marginal amounts of coal in today's glutted domestic markets are exported below cost in cut-throat competition between producers. For many big energy monopolies, such as Exxon with its Columbian mines, selling coal below cost to Europe is a loss-leader, with the long-term aim of driving European coal producers to the wall.

Given a sellers' market and a diminished coal industry in the 1990s, prices will rise. The coal import strategy allied to price increases will add perhaps $10 billion to the EEC's trade bill, swamping the modest trade and current account surpluses of recent years and turning them into huge deficits.

In addition the international coal market is invoiced in US dollars, like the oil market. When the dollar rises, therefore, imports are even more expensive. It is incredible, after years of struggling with the problems of dependence on imported oil, that the Commission seems determined on a course that would chain Europe to the uncertainties of the world coal market.

**George Kerevan and Richard Saville**

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*George Kerevan and Richard Saville are currently preparing a report on the future of the European coal industry for the British Labour Group in the European Parliament.*

depending on the concessions extracted — parts of the Ruhr.
**France:** Nord Pas de Calais, most of Lorraine and most of Centre Midi.
**Belgium:** the Limburg coalfield, which represents virtually all that remains of the Belgian coal industry.
And in **Spain** and **Portugal**, only mentioned in the proposals in passing, there would be little coal industry left either.

Why, after decades of open subsidy, should there be such a dramatic policy reversal? The previous doctrine that it's desirable to have 'assured supplies' has gone out of the window. Now it's all right, it seems, to rely on South Africa and Poland. In the case of a collapse in either country, says Mosar's memo, 'one can compensate for the other.' Not only is this politically and economically naive, but it also conflicts with another Commission document, *Energy Objectives for 1985*, which emphasises the need for security of supply.

Officially, of course, the change simply represents the first opportunity since 1976 to apply 'modern' economic thinking about the importance of 'market forces' to the EEC coal industry. Some in Brussels think that the change is a plot by the British to close more of their own mines by stealth.

The author of the first report was Christopher Audland, a former British diplomat, now the Commission's Director General for Energy. His boss, Commissioner Mosar, is universally acknowledged to be a pleasant, inoffensive Luxembourg politician, who knows nothing about energy and is out of his depth, whereas Audland is a skilled tactitian, keen to push the plans through.

Other sources in the Commission pinpoint Audland's number two, Karl-Heinz Richardt, a German who has been the chief coal civil servant for many years, as 'having been infected with a touch of German free-marketism'.

For the British government, this is not unwelcome. Ian MacGregor, chairman of the National Coal Board, is known to be happy with the Commission plan, and it would be politically convenient for him and Mrs Thatcher to be able to blame the Common Market for pit closures.

For the Germans it's more difficult. Although certain members of the Bonn government are not against the plans they cannot be seen to be supporting them. Chancellor Kohl has the added difficulty of a pledge he made to the miners at the end of 1984 that there would be no more cutbacks. Kohl's electoral support in the Ruhr is slipping and German voters are not so naive about EEC politics that they can be fobbed off with tales of malevolence from Brussels.

Belgium and France have sometimes tended to see the plan as a British-German intrigue against them. In Belgium the plans look like becoming an election issue. The Limburg coalfield is in the northern, Flemish-speaking part of the country and the Flemish Christian Democratic Party (CVP), which has strong support there, is susceptible to pressure.

The Commission will be making another attempt to reach agreement on the plans at a meeting on 18 September, and is expected to have to extend the present rules for another six months. What finally happens, of course, is up to the Council of Ministers. □



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ASIA

# INDIA CONDUCTS SRI LANKA'S TAMIL REBELS

## As talks reopen this week, AMRIT WILSON questions India's role as 'mediator'

> 'People have no rice, flour or oil — but our movements have a hysteria about guns. Every organisation's leadership is in crisis. The preoccupations are with money, armed training and recruitment — only fools can believe that these people will bring liberation and Tamil Eelam [a national Tamil homeland]. For a revolution we need a strategy and tactics but our concerns are not with politics or economics; we only want SMGs and AK77s . . . Also there is the question of our ultimate enemy — US Imperialism — why should there be any doubt about the correctness of uniting with a . . . state like India to fight US Imperialism?'

THIS LETTER, written late last year by a Tamil guerrilla who had just finished his training in India to friends in another liberation movement, exemplifies the agonising confusion which has dogged the rank and file of the revolutionary organisations fighting for a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka.

In the last few months tensions within the various Tamil liberation movements have reached breaking point. There are two major issues: their own leadership and the role of India. Officially, the Tamil struggle has two arenas. One is a diplomatic, essentially farcical one; the negotiating table where the peace talks (between the Sri Lankan government, five liberation movements and one parliamentary Tamil Party, the TULF) trundle intermittently on, with another round of talks beginning this week. Some Tamil participants have left the table, angered by the offers of the Sri Lankan government, only to make themselves available again through intermediaries.

The talks have done nothing to change the situation in Sri Lanka. Not only is the ceasefire (officially imposed for the duration of the talks) continually violated by the army, but Sinhalese civilians trained as Home Guards who have been provided with arms for use against Tamil 'terrorists' have gone on the rampage killing, looting and burning whole villages. Meanwhile the Indian government has established a 'moral right' to intervention, at any rate diplomatic intervention, in Sri Lanka. Despite its own failure to tackle demands for self determination in Kashmir, Nagaland, Mizoram, Punjab and other states, it has managed to establish this right, mainly as a result of Rajiv's new and highly active PR department. Thanks to them India's new Prime Minister — 'the Boris Becker of politicians' as he has been called in the Indian press — is now established as modern (he is interested in computers), dynamic (he gave a boost to private industry), and entirely unbiased.

Regional history, even the recent history of Indo-Sri Lankan relations is temporarily forgotten; from summer 1983 onwards, the Indian army provided training to all five liberation movements currently involved in the talks. The nature and effect of this training was described by a member of one group.

> It was purely military training, the Indian Army is a repressive army which has killed revolutionaries in India, people who have made exactly the same demands, so we were taught how to kill — that is all . . . But it has had another effect — every single person who received training can now easily be followed up by RAW.

The involvement of RAW (Research and Analysis Wing, more commonly known as the Indian Secret Police) is perhaps predictable. Set up during the Emergency, the secret police have been active in surveillance of every separatist movement within India and also in infiltrating left-wing groups in the country. But in this case, despite rumours of RAW's activities in Sri Lanka, the Indian government has another, if less orthodox method of control. The leaders of all five liberation movements involved in the talks have taken refuge in India. Almost all of them are comfortably established in luxurious houses in Madras City. They are effectively at the mercy of the Indian government which has already demonstrated its readiness to revoke their refugee status at any time it sees fit. Effectively India does not just mediate the peace talks — it controls them.

A SPOKESPERSON for the National Liberation Front of Tamil Eelam, a comparatively small but increasingly influential liberation group in Sri Lanka which does not receive any kind of aid from India, told me why they thought the Indian government has shown interest in the rights of Tamils.

> The Tamils in India have raised their voices against the Sinhala government of Sri Lanka. But a true victory for the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, a socialist state in Tamil Eelam would pose a threat to India, and also inevitably further the struggles for self determination of different groups within India.

It is true that Tamils in the Indian state of Tamilnadu have supported the liberation movements; what must make it more worrying still for Rajiv is that both major parliamentary parties were in the past separatist.

But underlying these fears of instability are powerful economic imperatives. Since 1978 India has moved closer to the West, both in economic terms with a massive IMF loan, special concessions for multinationals and new and repressive labour laws; and politically because with events in Afghanistan and Iran, India is gradually emerging as the last hope of the US in Asia. Yet Indian capitalism, with its chronic economic problems such as lack of demand and overproduction, is forced to actively seek markets in neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In its new role as aspiring regional super power, which includes policing its neighbours using arms deals and aid, Indian establishment figures have admitted the need 'to be a manager of the region's security'. □

# DEBT DRAGS US ALL DOWN

THE MULTI-BILLION dollar Third World debt crisis is again proving that so-called 'North-South interdependence' is no mere slogan but an inescapable fact of economic life. For the debt-induced recessions of Africa and Latin America have destroyed million of jobs in the Western creditor countries.

In its annual report released this month the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) claims that as a result of massive import cutbacks by the major debtor nations some 8 million work years of employment have been lost in the industrialised countries of Europe and the United States over the period 1982 to 1984. UNCTAD estimates that this three year contraction has caused the disappearance of between two to three million jobs.

Since 1981, the last year before the $900 billion debt crisis fully emerged, total exports by the industrialised countries to the Third World have slumped at an annual rate by some $46 billion. The disappearance of this trade reflects the dramatic measures undertaken by the major debtors such as Mexico, Brazil and Argentina as they were forced to cope with near default in the wake of record high interest rates and loss of export earnings caused by the international recession. The crisis accelerated so rapidly that 'there was little choice but to slash imports relentlessly' says UNCTAD.

As the International Monetary Fund and Western banks sought to secure interest payments and prop up the fragile international financial system, the debtors have sharply depressed their economies, dropping living standards and reducing domestic investment. In grim pursuit of the foreign exchange earnings required to service their loans the debtors have shifted their priorities to a policy of 'export or die'. Fresh bank lending to the Third World borrowers has come to a standstill and the flow of funds has reversed from South to North.

UNCTAD's analysis of what it terms 'the retransmission of deflationary impulses to developed market-economy countries' shows that Europe's trade decline is greater than the United States'. Almost three quarters of the Western nations' decline in exports is attributable to Europe. A large part of this loss has occurred because of total 'import strangulation' occurring in many debt ridden African countries.

Thus in their wisdom the world's financial community of bankers, IMF officials and government ministers are enforcing a 'solution' to the debt crisis which seeks to massage away a massive financial imbalance by creating an equally distorted balance in international trade.

This shortsighted approach can only encourage the risk of widespread 'beggar my neighbour' protectionism as country after country attempts to protect its domestic industries. Negotiated debt write-offs today would be far less painful than trade wars tomorrow.

**David Ward**



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# LETTERS

## Reply to James Baldwin

*Martin Sugarman, London E9*

Although agreeing and sympathising with the vast majority of what James Baldwin says (*NS* 23 August), it is a great pity that he weakens his case by distorting the facts on the question of Israel.

Mr Baldwin says he would not like to be an Arab in Jerusalem. Presumably he would also not like to be a Jew in Syria or Lebanon, where they have been abducted and murdered over many decades. And he ought to know that he would not be allowed as a Jew to live at all in Jordan, Saudi Arabia or any of the Gulf States. Further, whereas Arabs have lived, worshipped freely *and* prospered in Jerusalem (as in all of Israel), when the Arabs occupied it against UN law between 1948 and 1967, Jews were not allowed to live in their ancient Jewish quarter, which was utterly destroyed by the Jordanians; and Jewish tombstones from the Mount of Olives were smashed or used as paving stones and latrines.

Mr Baldwin's comparison between the ANC and the PLO is also totally spurious. Whereas the ANC have never been offered their own democratic state, the Palestinian Arabs have been offered theirs twice. The first was in 1948 by the UN partition plan — accepted by Israel despite the mortal danger of its minuteness and dispersed pattern of the proposed Israeli state. This was turned down by the Arabs.

The second offer was in 1980 at Camp David — an autonomous state for a transitional period, leading to ultimate independence — in return for mutual recognition. This too was turned down by the Arabs.

## Labour's lousy housing record

*Christian Wolmar, London N1*

Images, unlike mirages, are not conjured up out of thin air. Jules Lubbock's desperate attempt to rehabilitate Labour's image on housing policy is selective to the point of dishonesty (*NS* 30 Aug.).

As Lubbock himself pointed out, it was Labour councillors, drunk on the power of changing their urban landscapes, who got the tower blocks up. Bevan, laudably, never played the numbers game but it was under the Labour government of the '60s, elected with the (never fulfilled) promise of building 500,000 council homes per year, that the high rise boom peaked.

Reg Freeson may have been fascinated with co-ops but it is still numerically an insignificant form of tenure and only with Jeff Rooker as shadow housing spokesperson has Labour's interest in co-ops revived. It took a Tory government to ensure, with the Housing Act 1980, council tenants' basic right to security of tenure rather than eviction at the whim of their municipal landlords. Their motives were anything but pure but at least a start has been made. Tenants resisting eviction for their estates to be sold to private developers have put this right to good use even though the government is now partly trying to take it away from them.

As for council house sales, Tory councils sold the bulk of the 90,000. It was precisely because the Labour government had just imposed drastic curbs on sales that the Tories were able to use the right to buy in their 1979 election to such good effect.

Labour cannot campaign on a 'these are the guilty people' platform. The party's collusion both nationally and locally in the creation of the new slums is too great. The 'we have made mistakes in the past but. . .' approach is the only feasible and honest one.

## Money for Maire

*Maire O'Shea Defence Fund, Birmingham*

Six months after being detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act Dr Maire O'Shea has been committed for trial on a charge of conspiracy to cause an explosion in the UK.

The charge was brought only after Maire had been held in police custody for 4 days. The police did not present their case to the Director of Public Prosecutions until nearly four months after her arrest, and the prosecution has produced no clear evidence against her as yet.

Maire has been refused legal aid. Trade unionists and others active in the labour movement will already be aware how difficult a conspiracy charge is to defend, and how expensive it is likely to be. A fund has been formed to raise money for Maire's defence costs. The Defence Fund is appealing to all those active in the labour movement, or concerned with civil liberties, to take up collections or ask for donations from their trade union branches, political parties etc, and for any individual who can afford it to donate a day's pay.

Money can be sent to the Maire O'Shea Defence Fund at 448 Stratford Rd, Birmingham 11, or paid direct into Account No. 15038068, Trustee Savings Bank, Stratford Rd., Birmingham 11 (Bank Code 778558). Receipts will be supplied if requested. If sending money from abroad please use an International Money Order for sterling.

## BR says no collusion

*Grant Woodruff, British Railways Board*

'BR Goes for a Fight' (*NS* 23 August) made interesting reading. I was particularly interested to read that this dispute is a ploy by the Secretary of State, Nicholas Ridley, to 'provoke the NUR into striking and so clobber the union with the government's anti trade union laws'. There has been no collusion between government and the Railways Board on this issue. It is a straight dispute between railway management and the union.

Mick Hamer is also wrong in stating that there is a difference of opinion between the chair of the Railways Board, Sir Robert Reid, and the managing director, personnel, John Palette, in the approach to the issue of the introduction of driver only trains. If ever there was an issue where all BR management is of one mind, this is it.

The issue of driver only operation *was* referred to the national railway tribunal in 1982. Since then the NUR annual conference has twice blocked discussion of further productivity issues with the Board and this decision was not rescinded at their last conference either. There is no point in discussions when one party has no mandate.

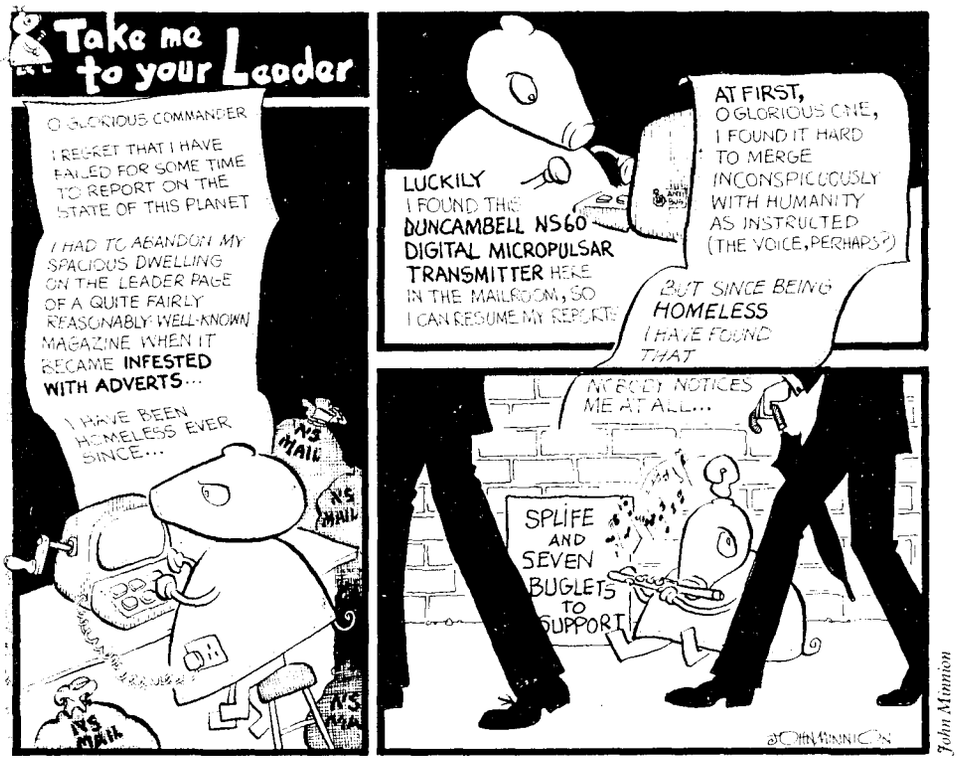
To say the implications for safety on driver only operated trains are grave, is to accuse BR of lowering its already very high safety standards. It is also wrong. Driver only operation will only be introduced on the most modern sections of suburban railway, protected by track circuits.

The trains will be open plan, fitted with sliding doors, brightly lit, with public address systems, and importantly, linked direct to signal controls by two-way radio. The signal operator will also be able to talk direct to passengers and to drivers of other trains too if need be. There are no plans to remove guards from InterCity trains, or from the majority of other services.

## Wight of reply

*Robert Jones, Secretary, Isle of Wight Labour Party*

What an amazingly vapid article from Caroline Rees (*NS* 6 September), armed with a whole weekend's experience of the Isle of Wight and what you choose to call its hopeless Labour Party. And not even an accurate one, at that. Do you


Take me to your Leader
O GLORIOUS COMMANDER
I REGRET THAT I HAVE FAILED FOR SOME TIME TO REPORT ON THE STATE OF THIS PLANET
I HAD TO ABANDON MY SPACIOUS DWELLING ON THE LEADER PAGE OF A QUITE FAIRLY REASONABLY WELL-KNOWN MAGAZINE WHEN IT BECAME INFESTED WITH ADVERTS...
I HAVE BEEN HOMELESS EVER SINCE...
NS MAIL
LUCKILY I FOUND THIS DUNCAMBELL NS60 DIGITAL MICROPULSAR TRANSMITTER HERE IN THE MAILROOM, SO I CAN RESUME MY REPORTS
AT FIRST, O GLORIOUS ONE, I FOUND IT HARD TO MERGE INCONSPICUOUSLY WITH HUMANITY AS INSTRUCTED (THE VOICE, PERHAPS?)
BUT SINCE BEING HOMELESS I HAVE FOUND THAT
NOBODY NOTICES ME AT ALL...
SPLIFE AND SEVEN BUGLETS TO SUPPORT
JOHN MINNION

John Minnion



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really suppose that I'd be so pompous as to describe myself as 'chief of operations' — or for that matter that I am 'self-appointed'? Ever heard of elections for CLP officers?

I'm sorry that Ms Rees could discern no coherent strategy from the meeting she attended, though it's perhaps unfortunate that she couldn't have taken the trouble to ask me about it. I'm sorry too that she regards our action against the Militant Tendency as a 'luxury': perhaps if she knew anything at all about the Isle of Wight, she would understand the reason for it. But then, if she did know anything about the Labour Party here (or anything about fighting elections, if it comes to that) she would realise that votes do not pick up 'without the party doing anything'.

But I am glad that Ms Rees got on so well with Charlene, one of our younger members: perhaps she'll introduce me to her some time, because there is no member of that name in the party! However, I do know the young comrade she is talking about, and I'm pleased to point out that she left our meeting very much more encouraged than Ms Rees seems to have been. And that, perhaps, is the answer to one of the most banal, poorly researched, soggily negative articles about this party or any other that I have had the misfortune to read for some considerable time.

*Caroline Rees points out that the descriptions of Mr Jones were not in quotes in her article, and were therefore her own words.*

## For the record

*Tony Williamson, Labour group leader, Oxfordshire County Council*

Contrary to Margaret Godden's letter (6 September), I did indeed say to your reporter that the Oxfordshire County Labour Group 'avoided any form of traditional power-sharing with the Alliance' and that we 'cannot oust Tory committee chairs without Alliance support.' As Oxfordshire has 31 Tories, 20 Labour, 18 Alliance and one Independent, any two parties can make a council decision, but no party can do so alone.

The real issue is that we were not willing to let either the Tories or the Alliance run any committees in the traditional way, unless they form a coalition. Our alternative strategy has been highly successful. The Tories have all the chairs but Labour and the Alliance have ensured that the chairs have no power. I do not think that this would have happened if the Alliance had had any major chairs, as they would have wanted the power as well as the seat. Thus all committees are run by the spokespersons of the three groups together.

The only Oxfordshire Tory to hold a traditional chair is the Chair of the Thames Valley Police Authority; he only achieved that position because of Alliance support through a deal for them to obtain two Berkshire Police Authority seats in return for Oxfordshire's Tory obtaining a place and taking the chair.

Meanwhile, new blast-proof doors are to be fitted to the County Nuclear Bunker thanks to sufficient Alliance support for a Tory proposal.

## Hooray for fudges

*Leslie Moody, London SE5*

Poking malicious fun at TUC procedures has long been a favourite media sport. I am sorry to see Peter Kellner indulging in it (*NS* 6 September). I am even more disappointed that he should trot out that discredited comparison between accepting government cash for trade union education and accepting it for ballots.

Public funding of trade union education is not a product of the Tories' employment legislation. It was negotiated with a Labour government at a time when even employers paid lip-service to constructive industrial relations and when all sides agreed that they would be encouraged by better informed and better trained shop-floor representatives. Public funding of ballots is linked inextricably with the government's imposition of ballot procedures that unions, until now, have had the right to decide for themselves. The 1982 Wembley Conference decided that the legislation should be opposed. Against that background to accept government cash for ballots is not only hypocritical but is bound to be seen to validate the legislation itself.

The dilemma in which Congress found itself this year was entirely of the AUEW's making. They knew the score and they knew the consequences of their actions. Given that they had no wish to leave the TUC, it is difficult not to believe that there was an unspoken assumption that the TUC would not dare to expel its second largest affiliate which provides about a tenth of its income.

The agreement hammered out last week may have been, as Kellner says, a fudge but, if the eventual outcome is that Congress authority remains intact and that the TUC remains one of the few trade union centres in Europe not divided on political or religious grounds, then hooray for fudges.

# FEEDBACK

## Seeing ain't believing

I READ WITH pleasure Peter Kellner's article (*NS* 16 August) on the Rocking Virgin of Ballinspittle (how appropriate in the week that saw the nuptials of the popular singer Madonna). The only thing that was lacking was the final step, the generation of an explanation of the effect. Having the advantage over Kellner of a formal training in psychophysics, may I round out his analysis by adding this final piece of the scientific jigsaw.

As most people will be aware, in order to take a photograph in very dim light one has to use a very slow shutter speed. This is because the film has to accumulate light energy over a period of time until enough has been absorbed by the emulsion to capture the image. The relationship between the amount of light available and the time required to gather enough of it to activate the emulsion is known as 'time-intensity reciprocity': high intensity, short time; low intensity, long time.

What is perhaps not so well known is that the human eye (or more strictly that part of it that corresponds to the photographic emulsion, the light-sensitive layer known as the retina) also shows time intensity reciprocity. It responds much more rapidly to bright lights than to dim ones. The consequence is that while a bright moving object will be seen pretty well where it physically is at the time, a dim moving object will be seen where it was a fraction of a second ago. This is because of the lag (technically called the 'latency') in response of the eye to dim objects.

Readers can demonstrate this effect for themselves quite clearly in two ways. First, try catching some object such as a bunch of keys thrown to you by a friend in very dim light. The chances are that you will miss: you will be grabbing at the keys, naturally enough, where you see them to be. But this will not be where they *are*, but where they *were* a few hundredths of a second ago. The faster the object moves, the bigger the error will be. (This is why cricket matches may be stopped for 'bad light'. The light may be perfectly adequate for viewing static objects, but the lag in perceiving the location of a cricket ball moving at 90mph can be very large, and very dangerous.)

Secondly, take a lighted cigarette and waggle it backwards and forwards in light which is just sufficiently bright to enable you to see the white body of the cigarette. As it is waggled, so the glowing tip will appear to separate itself from the body of the cigarette. This is because the brighter blowing tip is seen earlier in time than the dim body. The faster you waggle the cigarette, the bigger the disassociation of the two different-brightness components will be.

The same effect, incidentally, can be observed with objects of different colours rather than different brightnesses. Orange patches on a blue background seem to work best, and the effect is most striking in a dim light. If such an object is waggled, the orange patches will seem to float independently of the background. This effect was well-known in the nineteenth century when it was known as the 'Fluttering Hearts' phenomenon (the coloured patches were cut into heart shapes).

So far, then, we have explained how object movement can turn a time-lag into a position-lag. How does this apply to the Rocking Virgin? Peter Kellner already has the answer. He demonstrated to himself that head or eye movements can produce the effect when viewing a stationary object. This is because eye movement produces a movement of the image of the object on the retina. As far as the retina is concerned, movement of the image produced by eye movement is indistinguishable from that produced by movement of the object itself. The retina's differential time-lag does the rest.

**Dr B. Moulden**

*Dr Moulden is a lecturer in Visual Perception, Department of Psychology, University of Reading.*


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# Virgin on the rocks of ruin

*It's been a bitter year for Irish women, and it looks like ending in a court case which will complete the occupation of women's wombs. NELL McCAFFERTY looks back on how the judges, priests, doctors and politicians moved in*

Both photos: Derek Speirs/Report

As Kevin McNamara (above) led his crusade to stem permissiveness, Joanne Hayes (right) was subjected to an inquisition at the Kerry Babies Tribunal

GIVEN THE WAY the year began it is no wonder that Irish Catholics are flocking by the thousand to Marian shrines where, they sincerely believe, any one of sufficient faith can have a consoling chat with a walking, talking statue of the Virgin Mary. The Lady never mentions sex. She winks and sways morning noon and night, and all through the night, but she has not once invaded the private lives of those who kneel before her.

The year began with two devout adherents of the Catholic faith coming dramatically to public notice, the year was dominated by their separate experiences of private life and Ireland has not finished with them yet. In January, in the county of Kerry, Kevin McNamara was elevated to the most high position of Prince of his Church; Joanne Hayes, his parishioner, was brought before the Kerry Babies Tribunal.

In February, in Kerry, the first statue of the Virgin was seen to move.

For Irish Catholics it has been a year of public weal and sexual trauma that ended in superstitious prostration before the woman who got away — the only earthling ever to have an Immaculate Conception.

Kevin McNamara was promoted to the Archbishopric of Dublin, largest Catholic diocese in all Europe, as a direct reward for his efforts on behalf of Pope John Paul II to stem the flood of permissiveness that both men think is sweeping the Western world. It was from his diocese in Kerry that the once lowly Bishop spearheaded the successful drive to so amend the Irish constitution that abortion, already illegal, would be illegal for evermore. This country is the only one in the world to hold that the fertilised egg is equal in status to the woman who brings it to human fruition within her womb.

Last January, Kevin, now Archbishop, went a step further: all eggs, he said, must be open to fertilisation. He spoke plainly and without ambiguity of any kind. On Irish television he announced that married couples (he recognised no other) for whom natural methods of contraception are



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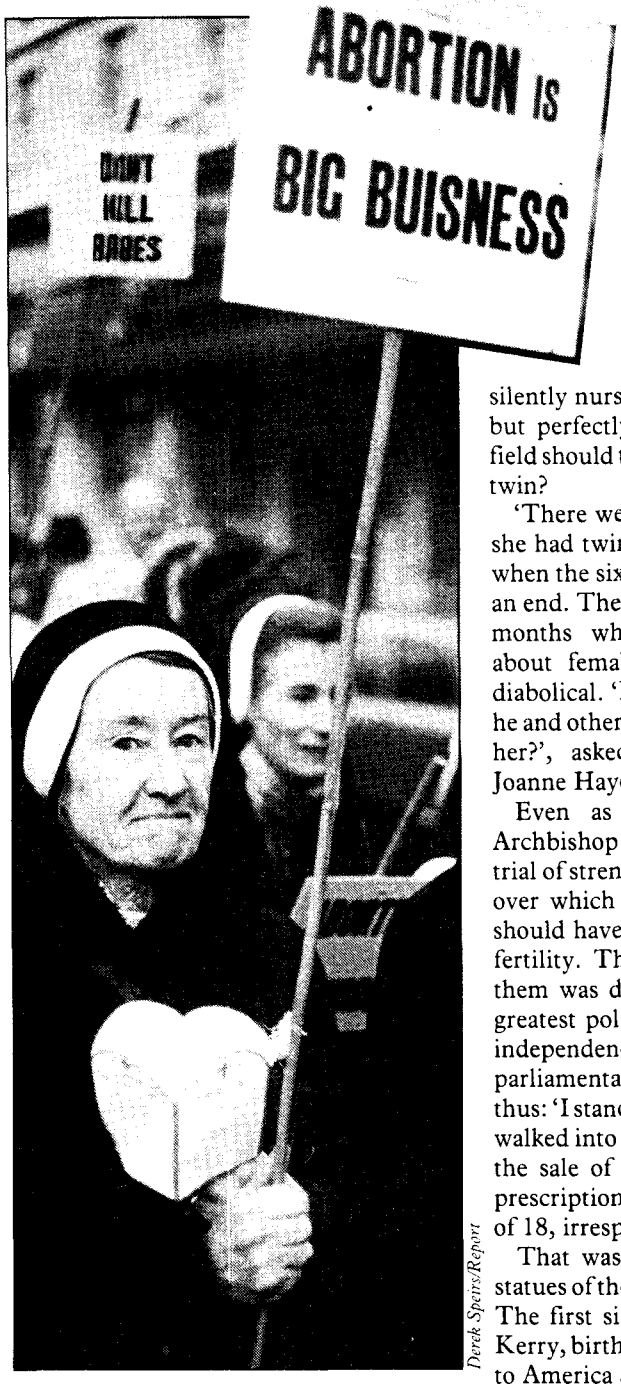


Derek Speirs/Report

**But stopping it is even bigger, as SPUC and friends are currently proving**

unsuitable, should refrain from sexual intercourse. This is the same man who holds that a marriage is invalid if sexual consummation, by which is meant penetration of the vagina by the ejaculatory penis, has not taken place.

EVEN AS THIS elderly celibate male spoke, his parishioner, Joanne Hayes, a young rural mother, unmarried, was speaking under sedation before an all-male Tribunal of Public Inquiry. She had a baby that died, and the police charged her with murdering another. The Tribunal, ostensibly investigating allegations of police corruption, was obsessed with one single question: could a woman conceive twins by two different men, give secret birth to one in a field, take to her bed and give birth half an hour later to another, which her family then stabs and disposes of, and could the woman all the while silently nurse the fact that there is a small but perfectly formed alibi buried in the field should the police discover the stabbed twin?

'There were times when we all thought she had twins', said Justice Kevin Lynch when the six month Tribunal had come to an end. There were times during those six months when Irish male assumptions about female sexuality touched on the diabolical. 'Did she love this man or what he and other men were prepared to do with her?', asked the police counsel about Joanne Hayes.

Even as this lawyer spoke, Kevin Archbishop McNamara was engaged in a trial of strength with the Irish government over which institution, Church or State, should have the right to control women's fertility. The debate that raged between them was described by the media as the greatest political crisis since the fight for independence from Britain in 1916. One parliamentarian summed up the choice thus: 'I stand by the Republic', and then he walked into the division lobbies to vote for the sale of condoms, without a doctor's prescription, to all male adults over the age of 18, irrespective of marital status.

That was the month, February, when statues of the Virgin Mary started walking. The first sighting was in Asdee, County Kerry, birthplace of Jesse James, who went to America and became an outlaw.

Ireland was at 'a moral crossroads' warned the former Bishop of Kerry, and 'the bitter fruits' of such a policy would be 'moral decline, the growth of venereal disease, and a sharp increase in the number of teenage pregnancies, illegitimate births and abortions'. He asked how any health board official, claiming to be Christian, could say 'I am prepared, if the State so decides, to supply to those who ask the means which will help them to commit serious sin?'

The chief state psychiatrist for his parish of Dublin testified before the Kerry Babies Tribunal that no man had helped Joanne Hayes commit sin. 'She got herself pregnant', said Dr Brian McCaffrey.

Other medical men came to the support of their new Archbishop. Seventeen of the country's most powerful senior consultants and doctors warned that the provision of condoms would lead to 'an increase in promiscuity with an upsurge in venereal diseases and carcinoma of the cervix'.

All the priests in Kerry signed a statement, read out at all Masses, that 'artificial contraception and premarital sexual intercourse are always wrong'. In the county capital, Tralee, where the mother of 25-year-old Joanne Hayes was asked to account for her 'failure to notice that her daughter was pregnant', 11 of the 12 pharmacists continued their refusal to stock condoms.

JUSTICE KEVIN LYNCH ignored the stand taken by doctors and priests and tried to get to what he saw was the heart of the matter: 'Is it possible for a woman to give birth standing up?', querying the insistence of Joanne Hayes that she had given birth in a field. Women have given birth under water, by the side of the road, in aeroplanes, in comas, unnaturally flat on their backs in hospital beds, and even given birth after life had departed their bodies, but this man wanted to know if a woman could give birth standing up.

> This country is the only one in the world to hold that the fertilised egg is equal in status to the woman who brings it to human fruition within her womb

'A barefaced, cheating liar', counsel for the police described her.

Defeated, albeit by a narrow majority, on the Condom Bill, the Bishops issued a collective pastoral entitled 'Love is for Life'. Sexual union, they wrote, is 'the means by which a man and a woman say to each other "I love you . . . I want you to become even more wonderful than you are . . . I need you, I can't live without you . . . I will stay with you through thick and thin".'

This pastoral was read, without a blush, by all the men at all their masses. Also, added the pastoral, extramarital and cohabitional sex were out, as was artificial contraception, homosexuality, euthanasia, sterilisation, abortion even in the case of rape, and not to forget that 'God's mercy is there for unmarried mothers who admit their sin and ask His pardon.'

Her two parish priests refused to say a cleansing Mass in the family home of Joanne Hayes. Her psychiatrists testified that she did not exhibit 'a great degree of guilt at this stage, not as much as I might have thought she would have.' Joanne Hayes lives, but other mothers are dying around her, or killing their babies, or



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Maxwell's Photo Agency

**No man helped her commit sin, 'she got herself pregnant'. Had this Rocking Virgin swayed the brain of psychiatrist Dr McCaffrey?**

casting themselves and their babies on the mercy of strangers and psychiatrists, and adoption agencies and abortion referral clinics.

The months of this sorry year in post amendment Ireland, where it is recommended that all eggs be fertilised, and ordered that all fertilised eggs be brought to fruition under pain of penal servitude for life, have been marked by sad horrors. In a Dublin working class suburb a 19-year-old cast herself and her unborn child upon the waters and drowned; in Northern Ireland a Protestant woman, deserted by her husband, gave birth in the kitchen and stuffed her dead newborn infant in the wardrobe; a newly delivered infant was found by the RUC in a garden; a swaddled baby was found in Galway railway station; a dead baby in a blue pillow cover was found floating in a lake in County Meath; Irish police sealed off a church in Limerick and asked all the women attending Mass to prove innocence of the baby found crying beside the altar; the mental home where Joanne Hayes was temporarily sheltered gave shelter also to the woman who relived, again and again, the shock of sitting on a toilet bowl and rising to find that she had just given birth to a child which fatally cracked its skull on the porcelain.

There has been progress, say some, quoting the Kerry poet who declaimed in verse the true story of his unmarried mentally retarded sister, left in unattended labour in the workhouse, in the hope that such a painful birth would teach her a lesson: that the unmarried mother shall know neither the benefit of hospital nor the mercy of God. She died in childbirth. That, they say, was in 1939.

Joanne Hayes, said a hospital source, had an unexplained voided womb, and the police should check her out as the mother of the stabbed Kerry baby. 'You had no intention of allowing that child to leave your womb alive', said the police lawyer about the baby to which she did give birth, which died instantly.

EVEN AS THE statues of the Virgin take flight the Bishops have staked out another moral crossroads. In County Galway Bishop Eamonn Casey, he who sang 'Totus Tuus' and 'Stolat' to the Pope, who garners more funds than any other man for the Third World famine, has written to the county hospital authorities. In an open letter he pointed out that the hundred sterilisations performed in 1985 on women who had completed their families ran contrary to God's law as interpreted by Irish bishops. His call for an ethics committee to run the hospital and tell doctors what to do — or not to do — was backed by the hospital consultant, who had also backed the Bishops during the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign.

The Bishops are not crying in the wilderness. Militant lay Catholic organisations whose ranks teem with doctors, nurses and lawyers, have rallied to their cause. Their influence is such that the Minister for Health was recently obliged to reserve 40 out of 200 places in a nurses' training school specifically for Protestant females, in the hope that they would help doctors perform operations which Catholic nurses find repugnant.

Kevin McNamara has allied himself openly with these paramilitant groups. He chose recently to launch a broadside against the contemplated introduction of civil divorce in a speech to Family Solidarity, which sprung up out of the ashes of the Pro-Life forces. Family Solidarity has dual membership with the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, and the coalition will this autumn go into court in its sleaziest operation to date, using the name of Eileen Flynn as the trojan horse by which they hope to complete the total occupation of the wombs of Irishwomen.

Eileen Flynn was a schoolteacher in a rural convent school. She met and fell in love with the father of three children, who cannot under Irish law secure a divorce from the woman who left him ten years ago. Ms Flynn set up home with this man and his children and they had a baby. The courts found this year that the nuns had the right to sack her, not for having a baby, but for conduct contrary to the Catholic ethos of the school. The baby, commented a local priest, was merely 'incontrovertible evidence of the immorality of her relationship'. In Iran, commented the Judge, woman were stoned to death for committing adultery.

Scarcely had Eileen Flynn packed her bags than SPUC sent a woman claiming to be a pregnant unmarried schoolteacher into the Dublin well-woman centre, which counsels on and caters to all aspects of female health. The woman mentioned Eileen Flynn and said she could not risk losing her job. The centre advised her of all the options open to her, ranging from adoption to abortion. The woman opted for abortion, was given the address of an English clinic, and went straight back to SPUC. SPUC have now taken out a court action, demanding the closure of the well-woman centre, which they say, is an abortion referral centre. The Constitution, they point out, is obliged to protect 'as far as is practicable the right to life of the unborn child'. It is perfectly practicable to close the well-woman centre.

The desolate situation of Irishwomen was ironically portrayed by a national evening paper on International Women's Day this year. Completely unaware of the significance of the date — 8 March — the paper's front page was entirely devoted to the war of the wombs. The top story headlined the comments of a member of the governing party, Fine Gael: 'Escalating social disorder' he said, was due to the fact that 'married women are leaving the home to work'. Underneath was detailed the case of the unmarried female police officer, suspended from duty for behaviour prejudicial to the good name of the force — she had had a baby. Alongside appeared yet another nugget of wisdom from the Kerry Babies Tribunal: Ireland was a promiscuous society said the detective who secured a false confession of child murder from Joanne Hayes. Many an unsuspecting man, he said, was rearing a child fathered by his neighbour. 'It can happen in minutes'. Eileen Flynn's appeal against sacking was rejected by the highest court in the land.

That edition of the paper has become a collector's item, offered as a prize in defence fund raffles organised by feminists. Editors meanwhile have chosen to ignore altogether the mumbling of Ireland's moral policemen. Priests, politicians, doctors and lawyers have all been bypassed in favour of a more wholesome story altogether, that of the woman who did it without sexual intercourse, the woman who conceived immaculately, whose lips on the subject are sealed.

The Blessed Virgin does not mention sex. She walks right away from it. She is adored. □

*Nell McCafferty is a journalist who lives in Dublin.*



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# Re-entering earth's atmosphere

David Edgar

**For a Pluralist Socialism**
MICHAEL RUSTIN *Verso* £18.50 & £5.95

MICHAEL RUSTIN is Professor of Sociology at North East London Polytechnic, a position of such massive archetypal weight that one would have thought its occupant would be restricted to the starkest of political alternatives: anent *The History Man*, surely it has to be either the hapless Professor Marvin or the horrible Howard Kirk.

In fact, however, Rustin is a creature undreamt of in Malcolm Bradbury's demonology, though no doubt some hard-left satirist will sooner or later caricature him in similarly scathing terms. He is, in short, a New Realist, and this compilation of essays — most first published in journals like the *New Left Review* and *Marxism Today* — clearly aspires to be at least the first draft of a revisionist manifesto.

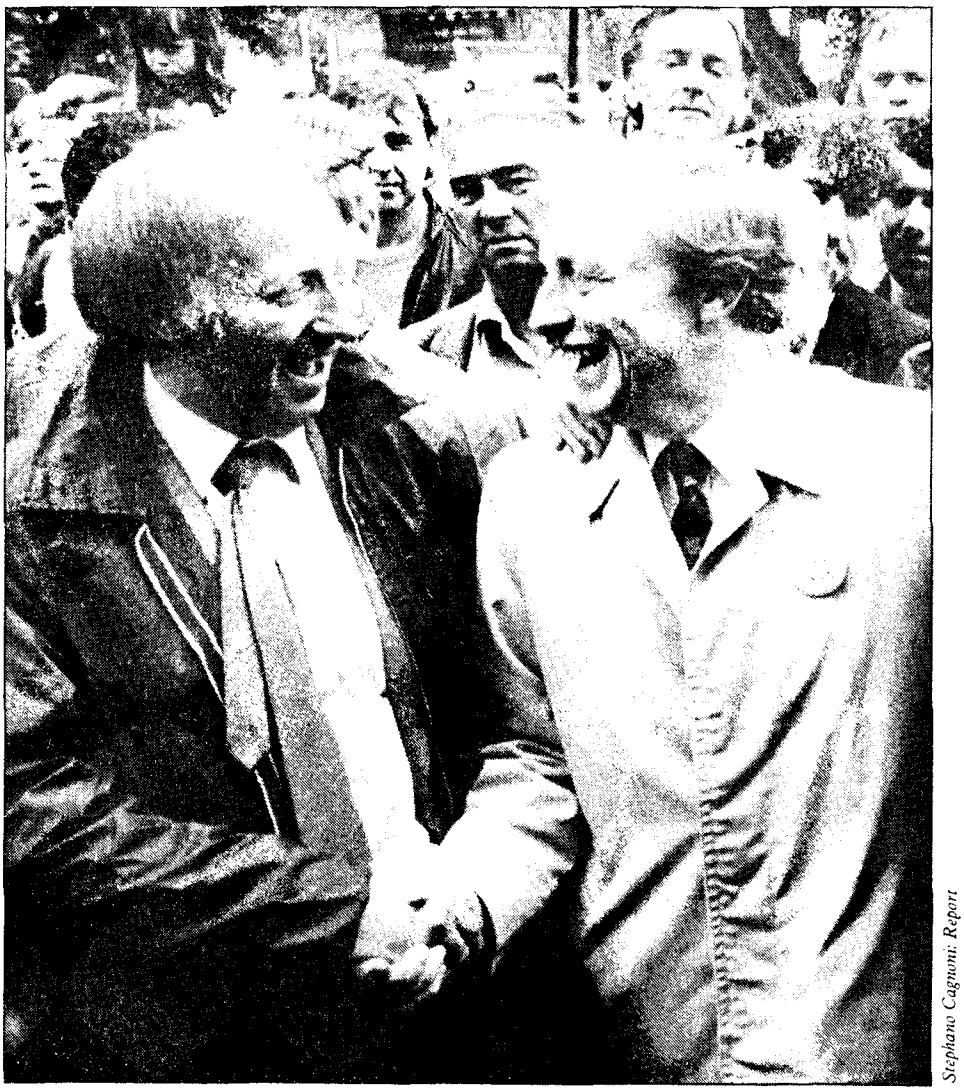
Despite his background in the academic New Left, Rustin's starting point is consciously programmatic rather than analytical; as he puts it (with not a little dry irony), 'there has been a scarcity of such informed practical reasoning on the left in recent years'. And, as if to emphasise this perspective, the down-to-earthness and practical specificity of his proposals on matters as various as proportional representation, workers' plans and tertiary education are carried to considerable if not on occasions excessive lengths (his piece advocating the repartition of Ireland virtually requires maps). But what is important about Rustin's arguments is not just their individual merits (which most possess, it must be said, in greater abundance than the above-mentioned), but that such an approach inevitably lays siege to the cult of oppositionalism which has so blighted and marginalised the British New Left since the late Fifties. (By oppositionalism, I mean a politics based on the conviction that any achievable gain is by virtue of that fact not only not a real gain at all, but indeed a positive setback.)

One immediate consequence of socialism's re-entry into earth's atmosphere is the need for it to start from currently existing ideological realities, and it is the second great virtue of Rustin's book that he is prepared first to confront and then (and partially thereby) subtly to subvert the New Right's own cherished political and psychological models of human behaviour. Hence, particularly, he takes on the Right's critique of equality, but does so not by denying the diversity of humankind but rather by socialising it. Building on the American Michael Walzer's concept of 'complex equality', Rustin argues that individuals find meaning within groups, of which they wish to gain and retain membership, and, indeed, it is only when there are real social alternatives on offer, between what he defines as 'vigorous moral communities', that individual freedom can have meaning beyond the mere absence of constraint. (Rustin's conclusion, again based on Walzer, is that 'socialism must be the sum of such particular worlds, and not an abstract alternative to them'.) Similarly, Rustin cites the social rights to education and health care as a precedent for his proposal for an equivalent right to paid employment; and praises the Swedish Workers' Fund system as a practical but collective alternative to the individualised worker's share so presently beloved of the SDP.

Like the Workers' Fund notion, many of Rustin's ideas draw on socialist experiments that have been tried and found to work, in the municipalities and elsewhere, and he is particularly keen to emphasise the contribution of the single-issue campaigns associated with the New Left in the Sixties and beyond, and of the new social forces around which so many of those campaigns coalesced and still coalesce. However, it is in the territory of such groupings — and of the social issues which are their primary concern — that the book's first draftiness is most apparent. The subjects of Rustin's individual chapters are central to the political and important for the economic conundra that socialists need to confront and resolve; they hardly address the social and cultural questions raised by feminism, gay liberation, the black movement and the various ecological, anti-nuclear and green campaigns. The need for broad alliances beyond that of the traditional working-class and the equally traditional middle-class intelligentsia is reiterated time and again — but there is a real sense in which, to misappropriate an American New Rightist's crack about George Bush, Rustin knows the words of the new politics but not yet quite the tune.

It is, I think, for this reason that Rustin's *vision* of his kind of socialism feels so dry. His critique of vanguardism — and his distrust of the attendant rhetoric — is consistently effective. What he fails to do is to put anything as emotionally workable in its place. Of course, the point of the New Realism is quite precisely to confront the romantic utopianism of the Old Illusionists. But everyone knows (not least Neil Kinnock, to whom, if anyone, the book is principally addressed), that political movements need to present some kind of image of what they are striving for, not least because it is precisely such an image that Mrs Thatcher has projected so effectively on to the upturned faces of the British populace.

If no such alternative vision was available (as it appears not to be, for example, for the Social Democrats), then a position of steely pragmatism has to be sufficient. But for socialists this is not the position. As the 1940s



Stephano Cagnoni: Report

**Neil Kinnock considering the options — taken from the cover of a book he might do well to read**



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have declined as an effective paradigm, methods and metaphors from a more recent political epoch have been increasingly taking their place. Rustin asserts that 'we should build our conception of socialism from the experience of callings, of art, of localities, of kinship or particular fraternities — all of which are endangered by both tyranny and the rule of capital'. Elsewhere, he praises experiments in new forms of local and neighbourhood organisation, and underlines the limited but in their own terms considerable successes of groupings as various as the Lucas planners and community theatre troupes. But, while noting — and applauding — pluralist and non-coercive forms of alliance, Rustin perhaps undervalues their common purposes and, despite the occasional mention of the 1960s, their common roots. The fact is that the most considerable and resilient attempts to inject socialist content into accessible social forms took place in the late Sixties and early Seventies. Then they were called things like co-operatives, collectives and communes, and I've never quite understood why those good words are so out of fashion today.

There will of course be many who claim that Michael Rustin doesn't present a socialist vision because he hasn't got one. It is clear (if nothing else, from his delicately unprovocative tone), that Rustin is aware that his views represent a considerable shift to what (in conventional terms) would be called the right of most of those with whom he was involved in the early days of the New Left. He makes, however, an excellent point about that movement, which was that it saw part of its role as 'to make it possible for most ex-members of the British Communist Party to remain committed socialists in good faith after they left', as opposed to the previous generation of ex-Communists who, feeling they had nowhere else to go, lapsed quickly into more or less extreme forms of conservatism. One obvious consequence of the new socialist pluralism is that another generation of viciously embittered ex-Leftists, frozen out of vanguards and determined to wreak revenge, is less likely to be created. Let a hundred Rustins bloom. □

### Apology

We apologise to reviewer, author and readers for some confusion in David Berry's review last week caused by a misplaced correction.

# False promise

Gregory Woods

**Leaves from a Victorian Diary**
EDWARD LEEVES *Alison Press/Secker* £8.95

FOR A DIARY to be publishable, it should shed light either on historical characters, situations and events or on the personal life of the diarist — who, in that case, must be interesting enough to merit its publication. The diary of Edward Leeves is being marketed as the second type.

According to the dust-jacket, 'Leeves was a Victorian gentleman, comfortably off, a man of taste, a staunch Tory — and a homosexual.' This fragment of his diary, covering the period from April 1849 to July 1850, 'gives a unique glimpse of a past world of feeling and of sexual isolation.' An additional blurb sent out with review copies goes further: 'What no homosexual could say in public, least of all an apparently orthodox, wealthy Victorian, Leeves confided to his diary.'

This is not true. As an ordinary gay man in real danger of blackmail or accidental exposure, Leeves clearly knew the meaning and power of discretion. Anything he judged to be too open, he subsequently erased; and even the erased material, now restored by the editor, is remarkable for saying nothing. (For instance: 'Saw J.B. We went up to Albany St.') Sex occurs behind punctuation marks: 'In the evening with T.R. to Paddington!!!' And the emotional climax of the whole book — when the guardsman Leeves was in love with contracted cholera and died — disappears into an editorial note: 'Several pages torn out.'

The publishers' marketing ploy is transparent. Here is an uncontroversial book on paper of good quality for affluent homosexuals to slip under each other's pillows. What the dust-jacket seems to promise them — tasteful bygone scenes of whispered sweet-nothings, or even ejaculated sweet-somethings, between an independent gentleman and a trooper in the Royal Horse Guards — will not materialise. Leeves is as expansive on his emotional life as he is on the weather: 'Mild,' 'Uncertain.'

Can this book be justified, then, as the other sort of journal, the valuable historical record? I think probably not. To be sure, Leeves does allude to momentous events. Part of his diary was written in Venice when the city was besieged by the Austrians; Garibaldi was on the move; the future shape of the Vatican state was being determined; Italy was suffering unification. But when one is writing a diary for *oneself* — as Leeves so obviously was — one does not describe things in enthralling detail as if for a future age. I concede that a specialist *might* find some unique fact here about the siege of Venice, or about guardsmen's ways of supplementing their pay. But such details would also have been available if the manuscript had been left unpublished in the relative privacy of a library.

John Sparrow provides an introduction and epilogue. The latter, a piece of doggerel to be gibbered to the tune of 'Three Blind Mice', is a degrading lapse of taste. □

# A centenary

*(Lower Clapton, 1883)*

J. C. Hall

From gas-bright pubs
Folk stumble home to sleep
While thrifty merchants
Rake the parlour coals.
A January snow puff
Flurries up the street,
Powdering railings,
Lamps and windowsills.

So night-time settles;
But one light still burns on
Down Orchard Place
Above the padlocked gates
Of Albert Works (there
Mineral waters stand,
Heady for action,
In next day's crates).

Upstairs a commotion:
A flame-flecked room
And pillows plumped
And that half-anxious air
Attending an old event
Always renewing. Soon
A small grey woman comes,
Bustling with care.

Hot water's called for
And fresh-laundered towels.
Necessary instruments
Lie in a row.
The men are banished
To their waiting roles,
Steadied by brandies.
It's beginning now!

A hundred years on
I celebrate this far
Hackney happening —
How towards dawn
The midwife pokes her
Brisk head round the door:
'A baby girl, sir.'
And I know I shall be born.

**A SPANISH FEMINIST**

Esther Tusquet's daring novel, *Love Is a Solitary Game* (original paperback £4.95) shocked Spain with its anti-macho sexual projection of a modern *liaison dangereuse* (deeply compassionate and painfully contemporary — *Catholic Herald*), and introduces an important new writer. *The Systems of M. R. Shurnas* by David Nemec (original paperback £4.95) is a new American novel, the hero a psychotic personality in a New York heat wave whose womanising leads to disaster (nightmarish alienation of urban life — *Tribune*). In paperback from William Burroughs: *The Ticket that Exploded* (new edition £4.95) and *The Place of Dead Roads* (£5.95), eye-opening avant-garde fiction. His collected essays, *The Adding Machine* (cloth £10.95), are published on the 27th. Other important novels: *Vail* by Trevor Hoyle (£4.95) depicts the future of Thatcherite Britain — very frightening; *Martereau* (£4.95), Nathalie Sarraute's second novel reissued, is a complex social intrigue (A beautiful book — *Scotsman*); two early Robert Pingets, *Baga* and *Mahu* (£3.95 ea.) show up our obsessions, with humour.

**POLITICAL PLAYS**

from Howard Barker, who has a 3-play season at the Barbican next month, are *The Power of the Dog* (£2.95), *Crimes in Hot Countries* (with *Fair Slaughter*) (£4.95), *Passion in 6 Days* (with *Downchild*) (£4.95). Barker's biting depiction of the misuse of power and ironic sense of history make his drama compulsive to see or read. He is emerging as one of the most arresting post-war dramatists. *The Wallace*, by Sydney Goodsir Smith (£4.95), was a triumph at the Edinburgh Festival, a poetic recreation of the great days of Scottish history. From France a new volume from René de Obaldia (Plays Vol. 4, £4.95), an entertaining absurdist, who in *Wind in the Branches of the Sassafras* & *M. Klebs and Rozalie*, dazzles and delights. Artaud's *Theatre and Its Double* (£3.95), now reissued, is one of the century's most important dramatic manifestoes.

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# Onward and inward

Paul Roazen

**Psychoanalysis and Beyond**
CHARLES RYCROFT ed. PETER FULLER
*Chatto/Tiger Stripe* £5.95

CHARLES RYCROFT is one of the few illustrious intellectuals in British psychoanalysis. His 1978 departure from the London Psychoanalytic Society came long after he had first been bored by the papers of his colleagues. Before becoming a psychoanalyst in 1947 he failed to appreciate the significance of sectarianism to the psychoanalytic movement. By the mid-1960s he was a notably sophisticated commentator and reviewer on psychoanalysis. He was so outspoken that, although it is curiously not mentioned in the fascinating autobiograhical pieces contained in *Psychoanalysis and Beyond,* Anna Freud once used her influence with David Astor to try to prevent Rycroft from writing reviews for the *Observer.*

This book, in which Rycroft is at his best, consists of a series of lovely essays, covering a wide range of topics, written over a period of many years. There is a fine chapter about the analysis of a paranoid personality, an excellent piece on the psychology of orgasm and an exceptional essay called 'On Continuity'. The most notable chapter, which had been circulated only privately before, is entitled 'On the Ablation of the Parental Images, or the Illusion of Having Created Oneself'. Here Rycroft is trying to understand some of the psychopathological reasons which may lead people to become psychoanalysts and how psychoanalysis itself can perpetuate a unique kind of human dilemma. The patients Rycroft has in mind seek ideal ancestors to take the place of the real ones they have dismissed; they appear to lack the usual internalisation of their parents; they are incapable of feeling grief, and construct a myth about themselves, after having disowned their parents. Persons of such a kind, Rycroft proposes, are drawn to the psychoanalytic movement, but in a way which may be harmful to the integrity of the discipline.

Rycroft connects the denial of indebtedness to the origins and nature of creativity, and uses Sartre to illustrate self-idealisation. Psychoanalysis appeals to 'ablators' because it enhances the illusion of self-creation; it strengthens their defensive system. And analysts who choose their own analysts subsequently become proponents of their analyst's theories in large part out of personal vanity, thereby reversing the biological humiliation of not being able to pick one's own parents. In Rycroft's own interesting essay 'On Autobiography', however, he implies that the autobiographical enterprise leads to an inevitable use of privacy to understand theorising; and, in this context, one wonders why Rycroft has decided to so down-play his professional indebtedness to one of his own analysts, Sylvia Payne.

These essays, which a useful bibliography shows to be only a portion of Rycroft's output, are uniformly level-headed, down-to-earth and at the same time broadly cultured. Yet Rycroft can be curiously narrow. For example, he writes about Freud: 'One wishes Freud could have reported forgetting the name of a tree or cooking utensil or losing a shopping list.' Whatever Freud's relationship to trees might have been, in that era few middle-class gentlemen knew in which direction within the house the kitchen was located. And in a dreadful self-confession Rycroft writes: 'Hegel and Nietzsche are not in my bones.' A psychoanalyst can do fine without Hegel, or at least Freud did; but Nietzsche, the man who Freud once said knew more about himself than anyone who ever lived, is another matter.

Rycroft shares a few crudities about Freud. The idea that the aim of all activity is to reduce tension may be questionable, and Rycroft does challenge it, but it is improper to reduce Freud's concept to the 'tendency' he had to fainting attacks. Rycroft, like many others, questions the rationalistic premises behind Freud's therapeutic approach. But Rycroft suffers from a kind of ahistoricism. Just as a few isolated instances of Freud's fainting do not, I think, constitute a tendency, so Freud's actual practices as a clinician are more variegated than Rycroft supposes. It should be said that, although Rycroft has succeeded in going beyond Freud, he is writing in Freud's own best spirit; for instance, Rycroft believes that 'it is the capacity to love which makes us feel good'.

Peter Fuller, who tells us he was a patient of Rycroft's, has admirably edited the book into a readable whole, but written an introduction which is on a distinctly lower level than Rycroft's own work. Although Rycroft is always interesting, I would expect him to be embarrassed by Fuller's claim that these essays constitute 'a major, innovative contribution to our understanding of ourselves and our species'. Rycroft has sought to combat such idealisation of therapists. Throughout Fuller's introduction there are signs that he is not well versed in the history of psychoanalysis. It is incorrect, for example, to state that Karl Abraham made any special point about the mother-child relationship, certainly not compared with the contributions made at the time by analysts like Otto Rank, Georg Groddeck, Sandor Ferenczi and also Helene Deutsch. On specific points Fuller is ignorant; for instance, in addition to his British analyst John Bowlby also had a Viennese one. Finally, Fuller like Rycroft is not sufficiently broad to appreciate when an insight has been anticipated by Jung.

Rycroft is a descendant of the so-called Middle Group of British psychoanalysts, that assortment of free-thinkers which never had the money, power or dogma that one thinks of in connection with the rival factions led by Melanie Klein and Anna Freud. And it is in keeping with Rycroft's own continuity with his ancestry that one of this book's best essays consists of a memorable tribute to D. W. Winnicott, a man whom, in Winnicott's lifetime, Rycroft viewed as the genius of British psychoanalysis. □


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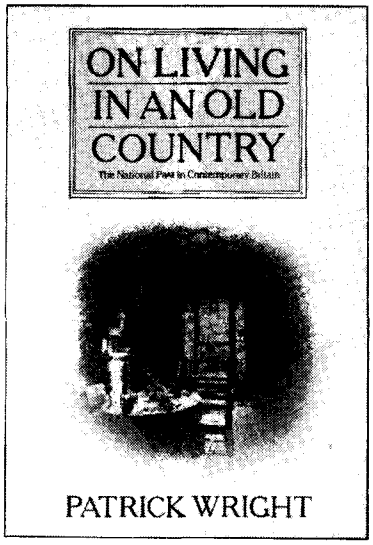


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# Middle management

Malcolm Bruce

**Partnership of Principle: Writings and Speeches on the Making of the Alliance**
ROY JENKINS *Secker* £9.95 & £5.95
**Partners in One Nation: A New Vision of Britain 2000**
ed. DAVID STEEL *Bodley Head* £9.95 & £4.95

DETRACTORS OF the Alliance are fond of saying that Liberals and Social Democrats lack substance. A 'bit of fluff', Roy Jenkins reminds us, was Callaghan's description.

These two books show that there is, in fact, intellectual and practical force behind the two parties. Jenkins sees them both as being the radical centre. His speeches and articles, collected here, demonstrate his clear sense of history and the belief, as David Steel puts it, that 'we are working with the grain of the British genius, rather than against it like the ideologists'.

The theme of partnership is pervasive. For liberals, community politics is more than an extremely effective campaigning technique. It is the basis of modern Liberalism, providing a distinctive approach to all aspects of policy making. Roy Jenkins confirms his view that the creation of the SDP was necessary in order to provide a catalyst for the breakthrough that the Liberals needed. But his writings are characterised by a deep understanding of Liberal history. He quotes Gladstone in saying that the Alliance can become 'a union of hearts'.

His work is peppered with elegant phrases and literary/historical allusions. His style is readable, mixing commitment, experience and clear analysis. He is a thinker who knows how to do and, a rarer commodity, a doer who knows how to think. He is contemptuous of Mrs Thatcher's simplification of the complexities of government, especially in economic affairs. He calls her 'a self-righteous Prime Minister of narrow, if firm judgement surrounded by a weak Cabinet of her own creatures'.

David Steel's book, which contains chapters from eight contributors including himself, extends and amplifies the partnership approach into major areas of policy. The book germinated during his post-election sabbatical and was developed at meetings with Liberal friends co-chaired by himself and Ralf Dahrendorf.

The title is deliberately cheeky to attract the attention of Tory wets (and challenge the public divisiveness of Tory, Labour and TUC during the conference season). The articles all display radical thinking, free from ideological prejudices, cant or preconceptions — other than about the need to promote partnership.

Steel wants business, challenges unions and Government to discuss economic priorities in order to achieve a fairer distribution of work and rewards. This line is developed by James Meade into an economic package for full employment, wage restraint and the distribution of income through a refinement of Liberal ideas about industrial democracy.

Nancy Seear contributes a down-to-earth chapter on the future of work. 'The world is not running out of work that needs to be done,' she says. 'It is running out of the capacity to pay for it and the political will to match the supply to the demand.'

There is despair among the more thoughtful members of British boardrooms at the lack of partnership between government, business and industry. Lord Ezra puts his finger on this, identifying the extent to which modernisation of our industry and an aggressive 'buy British' policy will be essential as oil revenues decline. He stresses the Government has got it wrong about new technology, jumping on a fashionable bandwagon it does not understand. He explains that the importance of new technology lies in the extent to which it can be used to stimulate innovation in industry as a whole.

Ralf Dahrendorf takes a realistic look at the welfare state. Other contributions, including those from John Alderson and Trevor Phillips, deal with the need for improved community relations through a better deal for deprived minorities (especially the young) and improved relations between the police and community.

Richard Holme concentrates on the need for constitutional and political reform, using a rare Marxist allusion: 'Hegelian antithesis is easy to achieve in Britain. What is becoming almost impossible is creative synthesis.'

Jenkins's approach reveals his intellectual roots to be held in common with Liberals. Understandably, it is on the economy and Europe ('It is stagnation I fear, not disintegration') that he is most compelling. He pinpoints the alarming weakness of Britain's economy in dealing with declining North Sea oil production and is concerned that Europe is lagging behind the USA and Japan. He identifies the international action required and — again — the need for greater harmony between government and business.

His commitment to constitutional reform is deep, sincere and lucidly argued. His forthright declaration of the case for a Scottish parliament at the Hillhead by-election was a turning point for the Alliance in Scotland.

Both books contain friendly but pointed messages for David Owen. David Steel's demonstrates that there is a ferment of constructive, workable ideas among Liberals which should be drawn on, especially as Liberals and most Social Democrats agree that the objective of the Alliance is government. 'We must set no limit to the bounds of our success,' says Roy Jenkins in his introduction. 'We should campaign at least for power, not balance . . . Post Thatcher the country will not want a sub-Thatcherite alternative . . . It is much better that we should keep our radical edge well-honed and endeavour to cut as deep in Durham as in Devon.'

Both these books make a worthwhile contribution to that end, although would-be readers of the committed Left (or Right) should take note of David Steel's epilogue:

> It is easy to fight the class war. It is far more difficult but more worthwhile to act as the catalyst of new policies and attitudes, which could bring unity where there is division. □

*Malcolm Bruce is Liberal MP for Gordon*



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## FICTION

# War of the worlds

Liz Heron

**The Good Terrorist**
DORIS LESSING *Cape* £9.50
**A Handbook for Visitors from Outer Space**
KATHRYN KRAMER *Faber* £9.95
**High Ground**
JOHN McGAHERN *Faber* £8.95
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CECILE PINEDA *Viking* £8.95
**Parrot's Perch**
MICHEL RIO *Dent* £7.95

'A WRITER undergoing a profound and continuing cultural trauma, a woman of determinedly utopian and distinctly teleological bent assaulted at every turn by fresh evidence that the world is not exactly improving as promised.'

If you can overlook their hostility, these words from Joan Didion's 1971 essay remain a pertinent commentary on Doris Lessing's writing. Now, in the face of the drastically unimproved world of the Eighties, she has produced a novel anchored not in the remote and gentler realms of space fiction, but in the urgent present.

Sardonically told, the story of motherly, responsible Alice and her fellow squatters is a fictitious prelude to something closely resembling the Harrods bombing of 1983. A loosely assorted household, all members of a tiny left-wing group, decides that the way forward is to work with the IRA; peeved by an Irish rebuff, they eventually go ahead regardless towards an act of indiscriminate violence; rumours of the KGB and spy schools lurk in the background.

As a jaundiced picture of communal lifestyles and relationships, **The Good Terrorist** is mercilessly convincing in all but occasional jarring details and absorbing in its elaboration of the tortuous patterns of power and dependency that can assert themselves in place of formal hierarchies. But, as powerfully sure as is Doris Lessing's grip on the emotional lives of her characters, her portrayal of their political habitat is farcically crude, the stuff of 'loony left' caricature. That Alice, so shrewd and perspicacious and with a well-developed impulse to kindness, should have such a mindlessly vicious political persona would be puzzling, were it not so transparently a demonstration of the writer's contention that political anger perverts and destroys: all forms of it, as made explicit in the illuminating confrontation between Alice and her mother, a left activist of many years, now disillusioned.

Yet what undermines Doris Lessing's insistence on the futility of politics — her clear acknowledgement of the world's injustices and cruel inequalities — is what makes the book most interesting. While pleading for peaceful coexistence and mutual tolerance the writer can propose no solutions within the context of her novel's realism. Here Doris Lessing shows herself to be as percipient an observer of sexual oppression as ever she was, pointing a warning finger towards the traps of self-sacrificing mothering. And, if it needs saying, still a utopian.

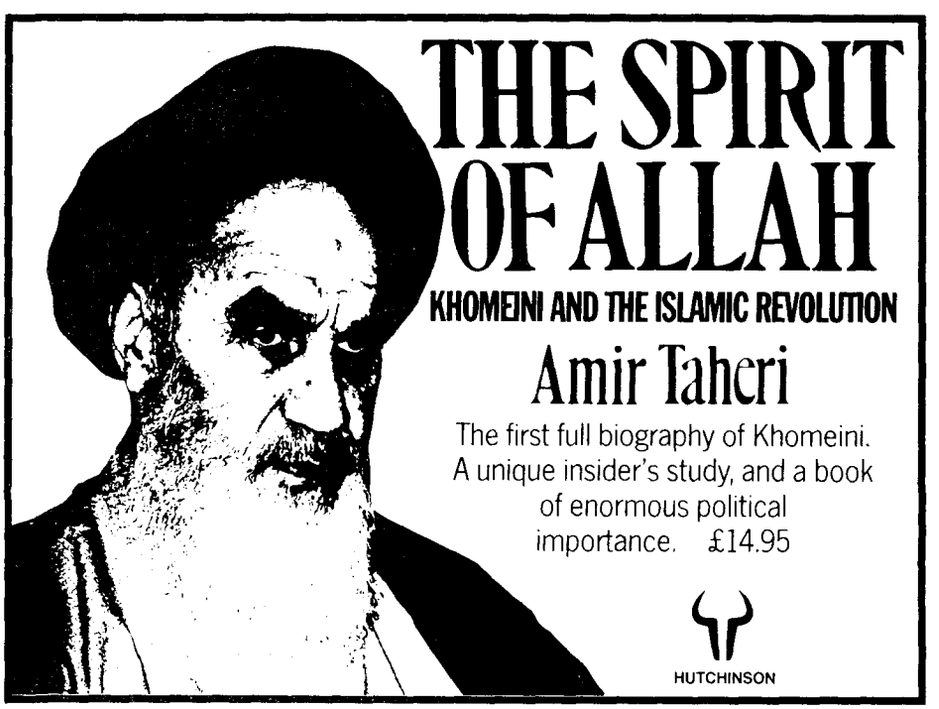
**A Handbook for Visitors from Outer Space** bulges with the perfidies and mass-deceptions of the post-nuclear age, but Kathryn Kramer makes light work of them in a large, billowing narrative so beguiling that its darker intimations go almost unnoticed. The lies and evasions of family life, the mysteries of parentage and separations (smoothed over in suburbia, fantastically mythologised in the Gothic mansion that grotesquely cultivates its own version of the American Way) are but grist to the mill of hero Cyrus Quince, a Candide in reverse, making his way to manhood while knowing more than everyone around him, but too addicted to secrecy to tell a thing. While Cyrus has learned the arts of observation and dissimulation at his grandfather's knee, and later at spy school, a shadowy war without battlefields has encroached on the country's consciousness. But life goes on as normal. What would the extraterrestrial visitors discover but the never-never land summed up in one character's idly noted nostalgia for high school days: 'She had read somewhere that Americans were laughed at by other nationalities for clinging so nostalgically to an age everyone else tried to get through as quickly as possible; still she couldn't help it.'

Enjoyable and clever though it is, the book's complicit mood of adolescent whimsy is its own big weakness.

Ireland, on the other hand, evokes quite a different stage of life in the well matured short stories of John McGahern. Whether shading in the melancholy of rumpled Dublin bohemia or delicately colouring the seasonal tints of country vistas in the Irish midlands, he exercises a fine precise touch on the variations of time and atmosphere. The stories in **High Ground** are linked by their elegiac mood of mourning in the wake of painful change. It's as if Ireland's too rapid shift of values from the 19th-century rural to the 20th-century urban and industrial has caused a seismic crack in its structures of community that nothing can heal; and the wound festers. Only through the isolated efforts of individuals (often strong-minded women) can some forms of renewal emerge, though not without hurt.

The story that encapsulates the collection's themes in the most obvious symbolism is nonetheless effective. In 'Gold Watch' the family heirloom is long since stopped and unrepaired, until the lawyer son claims it for himself on one of his annual visits to the farm, later returning with an expensive modern replacement. His father's coldly calculated destruction of it is an irrevocable judgment on his life, but the heartlessness of the gesture is overshadowed by its finality: the inconsolable sadness of a country from which time has been stolen.

Both **Face** and **Parrot's Perch** are short novels whose subject matter is the experience of physical suffering and mental agony, and the reconstruction of self out of these. In *Face*, set in Brazil, a man is horribly disfigured by a fall, and is made an outcast. Using his barber's knowledge, he performs rudimentary plastic surgery on himself. *Parrot's Perch* opens with a priest's refusal of the community of faith in the French abbey that has given him refuge; some years before, in his own Latin American country, he had been the victim of brutal tortures. Haunted by his memories, in the course of one day he wrestles with his inner conflicts of belief, the landscape he crosses and his two encounters in it suggesting an epic journey of spiritual exploration. Both books are intense and finely wrought; both end on a wanly hopeful note of reconciliation. □



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# Shorter reviews

### Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood

JAN MARSH *Quartet* £18.95

We have been fed for a long time on gossip about the Pre-Raphaelites and their women, those Blessed Damozels staring wild-haired from canvases or catching their deaths pretending to drown. This scholarly and original book asks new questions, radicalises the legend and looks afresh at the Pre-Raphaelite experience and products in the light of the pressures exerted on Victorian women.

Who remembers that flame-haired, goitrous Lizzie Siddal was not merely a victim of her husband's emotional mauling over a decade, but an artist in her own right, one who earned Ruskin's patronage to the tune of £150 a year? Dr Marsh claims (and I agree with her) that Lizzie was a poet of real feeling and technical control. Lizzie first interested Dante Gabriel as a protégée rather than a sex object: both she and Janey Morris, archetypes for us of Victorian soulful sexiness, were considered 'plain' until subjected to the Pre-Raphaelite media massage. Their ungainly hands and feet were attributed by contemporaries to their low social origins. Struggling artists, despite ambitions to be socially mobile, could not afford the daughters of the bourgeoisie, though Ned Burne-Jones married Georgie, daughter of a Methodist minister.

All three women had sad lives: Lizzie was over 30 when Gabriel got round to marrying her and died shortly afterwards; Janey, in love with Gabriel, married Morris *faute de mieux* and later spent holidays with Gabriel while William betook himself to Ireland. Georgie suffered stoically while her husband flirted with the flamboyant Mary Zambaco. Dr Marsh suggests that many of these *affaires du coeur*, while causing anguish and disruption, were unconsummated, and sees in much of Pre-Raphaelite painting images of sexual frustration.

The author brings to life the concealed ambitions and achievements of these courageous, dedicated and intelligent women, foregrounding them to throw light on the dynamics of the circle. She notes the 'soft-porn' aspects of prim Victorian art, surely obvious, though rarely discussed. One has, though, to hold the key artworks in one's head or in a handy reference book: too many pictures evoked in the text are not illustrated.

**Valerie Grosvenor Myer**

### Guide to Modern World Literature

MARTIN SEYMOUR-SMITH *Macmillan* £40

One of the unsatisfactory features of a university course in English Literature was the fact that none of the pundits ever seemed to have an *opinion* on anything. They made assessments, judgments and reassessments, but they just never passed an opinion. It was all so careful and *sanitised*.

Martin Seymour-Smith's new (revised) edition of his *Guide* comes as a breath of free, fresh air. He is wonderfully opinionated. Of Tom Stoppard, he comments that he 'has attracted perhaps more spurious and empty-headed adulation than any writer of his time. He offers us the quintessence of boulevard culture . . . he offered the thoughtful reader or playgoer nothing but illusions, most especially that of "deep cultural experience".' Wesker's *Trilogy* is 'sprawling, muddled — but passionately alive'; D. H. Lawrence was a writer of 'indisputable genius' — 'unkind, prejudiced, a would-be sex-mage whose grasp of his subject was notably imperfect'; 'Muriel Spark . . . writes well and concisely, and this has tended to obscure the psychological superficiality and sheer petty malice of her content', and so forth . . .

This is critical interpretation as it should be written, to engage, irritate, entertain and delight. Of course there are weaknesses and omissions (Kenzaburo Oë, one of the best modern Japanese novelists, for example, isn't here) but these are insignificant in the light of the magnificent achievement of the book — it is astounding that one man could have covered the range Seymour-Smith does here and covered it so responsively and courageously.

**Anne Smith**

### The State of the Police

PHIL SCRATON *Pluto* £4.95

In attempting to survey and comment upon development in contemporary policing this book's most obvious disadvantage should have been the time-lag between its writing and its publication. But developments subsequent to the book's writing have, if anything, strengthened Scraton's assertion that a highly professional police force now operates with complete autonomy, free from any democratic control or public accountability.

Merseyside County Council's Police Committee, chaired by Margaret Simey, has been at the forefront of local authorities' attempts to bring about some form of police accountability. Scraton chronicles the early struggles, from Simey's assertion in 1976 that the structure for accountability already existed in the Police Committee, to the aftermath of the Toxteth Riots in 1981 and the 'Community-Liaison' compromise, to Simey's realisation during the miners' strike that the Committee was nothing more than a superfluous 'Rubber Stamp'. The narrative concludes at the end of 1984, before the existing provisions of democratic control had been fully exhausted.

Scraton dismisses the tradition of 'policing with consent' as a long-standing myth and illustrates how working-class communities have resisted the police since their inception. If a 'Golden Age' ever existed it was confined to the 1950s and '60s, when full-employment and relative prosperity provided the foundations for an uneasy truce.

Since then, the police have adopted more repressive tactics than ever; 'diversionary interlude' of 'community policing' after the 1981 riots is here exposed as a cynical manoeuvre, facilitating 'community surveillance'. In the wake of the miners' strike even this thin veneer has become transparent.

Orgreave supplies the dramatic backdrop to this crisis in policing. The recent acquittal of miners on charges of riot and the new evidence concerning the affray have placed the whole issue of policing at the centre of public concern and political debate. This book provides an essential framework of reference.

**Michael Bell**

### Torture

EDWARD PETERS *Blackwell* £17.50 & £5.95

Imagine yourself in a pleasant English teashop one afternoon chatting with a companion. He takes a mouthful of cake and begins to recall his degradation at the hands of South African torturers. Listening to his story in that place is incongruous, disturbing, but he doesn't seem to notice it. Most of us would probably prefer to deal with the discomfort which the idea of torture provokes by pretending it has nothing to do with us, or by pushing it aside into a territory occupied by psychopathology. But that man knew that the truth is different and that torture is *ordinary* and involves ordinary people.

Edward Peters confronts that sense of moral outrage, places it into an historical context and suggests that it may be an unproductive feeling:

> the term 'torture' itself becomes simply picturesque, its legal definition is gutted and in its place is substituted a vague idea of moral sentiment. It is then easy to argue torture away . . .

Morality, he suggests, may make a poor custodian of human rights because it is always possible to set a higher principle against the imperative not to torture. We all have to confront the argument that it may be justifiable to torture one person in order to save the lives of many. As others have since, the French in Algeria adjusted to such *necessary* torture and drew up guidelines for its humane application. Yet it had been French enlightenment philosophy which contributed to a notion of human dignity that abolished the practice. 'Torture has ceased to exist' declared Victor Hugo in 1874.

The reasons for this paradox, and for the fragility of abolition, are analysed in the book. Peters traces the precise history of torture from classical Greek origins to modern times, not through a catalogue of horrors but by careful exposition of its public, legal and juridical nature. Such an approach may be criticised for ignoring the centrality of the victims' suffering, but the important point, surely, is to comprehend *why* there are victims at all. This book may not hold the key to eradication of torture; it does assist our understanding of torture as an institution and that may channel some of the guilt and horror into the acceptance of common responsibility for such an unwelcome 'engine of state'. Then it can be dismantled.

**Tony Beeton**

### How Can I Keep from Singing

DAVID KING DUNAWAY *Harrap* £8.95

'That's no banjo,' a friend of mine remarked on seeing an old film clip of Pete Seeger at a civil rights rally, 'that's a five-string halo.' For some, his aura of moral and political integrity is a kind of schmaltz. Many, however, would regard the man whose refusal to trim kept him on the blacklist and off television for more than a decade as the embodiment of political folk song's highest ideals.

In this large and lucid biography, David King Dunaway has avoided hagiography but established beyond doubt Seeger's importance both as a musician and as an unsilenceable dissentient voice in American political life.

Having made ineffectual stabs at journalism and painting, Seeger, Yankee preppy and Harvard drop-out, decided in 1939 at the age of 20 to make a career out of his country's authentic music and, having bummed around the country, went on to have hit records with the Almanac Singers in the Forties, the Weavers in the Fifties and generally as a solo performer.

During Communism's boom period before and during the war, Pete Seeger carried a card, though always more interested in *causes* than the round of meetings or policy detail. His contribution was to help bind people together with song, often, as at Peekskill in 1949 when the Klan, with police connivance, broke up an anti-cold war concert, braving violence to sing.

Dunaway depicts a reserved Puritan, ill at ease with those whose ideals do not match his own, hard to live with and happiest either with an audience or alone with his banjo in his log-cabin home.

It is fashionable to play down Seeger's musical ability. Seeger does so himself; but it is no small thing to have written such protest anthems as 'The Hammer Song', or to have persuaded so many to take up banjo and guitar, or to sing with such lilting gusto to millions. Seeger's skill with audiences is nicely caught by his biographer. Anyone with an interest in folk music or the America of the last half century should read this book.

**Donny O'Rourke**



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## MUSIC

# New romantics

Andrew Clements

**Anthony Payne: The Spirit's Harvest**
**Robin Holloway: Viola Concerto**
*Albert Hall/Radio 3*

ONE OF THE BBC commissions for this year's Proms failed to arrive on time; another turned out to be an unmitigated disaster. But the works from both Anthony Payne and Robin Holloway proved at least worthwhile and sometimes rather more than that.

Other critics have indeed heaped voluminous praise upon Payne's symphonic poem **The Spirit's Harvest**; one proclaimed it a masterpiece. Certainly, its big-boned, authentically symphonic structure seems endearing in a time of non-functional harmony and highly sectional planning; there's no doubt also that it marks a decisive turn in Payne's development. The closing sections — a huge, dark adagio that implodes into nothingness and a cursory, throwaway scherzo that arises from the ruins — carry an emotional directness which is new in his music, confirming that the last vestiges of constructivism have been abandoned and that he now feels confident to write the melodic-based music which comes most naturally to him.

The way that climax and catharsis are reached, however, is a bit less convincing. For the first 15 or so of the work's 28 minutes there is a doggedness about the working out of the themes, a concern for intellectual coherence over colour and variety, even though later Payne uses orchestral timbres with virtuoso brilliance. A short introduction that presents the three main themes of the poem is followed by the first section proper and then by a pastoral rumination, and the contrast between them, in terms of metre and tempo, is not sufficiently well defined to emphasise the points of articulation. Perhaps a more relaxed performance with themes sharply characterised would help but, in the meantime, the second half of *The Spirit's Harvest* still packs sufficient punch to produce a warm glow in those who think that the symphony is not dead but merely biding its time for an emphatic reassertion of its pre-eminence.

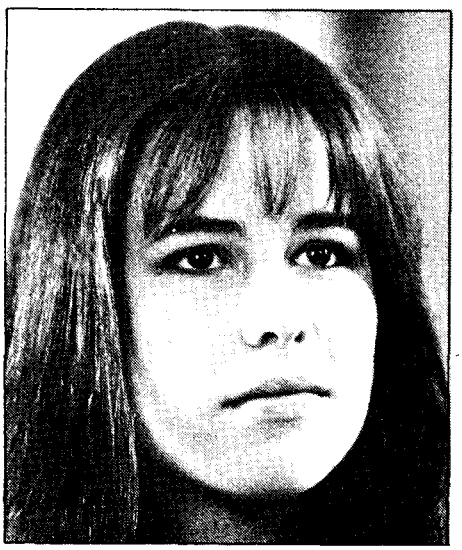
Robin Holloway's music is equally likely to warm a few hearts, but then he had declared his romanticism long before it again became fashionable to do so. Holloway's range of stylistic reference now is so wide and its integration handled with such adroitness that one hardly knows where the real core of his music is located. The **Viola Concerto** contains none of the Ivesian melées which provide his fine *Second Concerto for Orchestra* with riotous climaxes, nor the persistent and systematic use of quotation that fuelled his early scores; the idiom instead is quietly tonal, though not without its fair share of exotic chords, and the dovetailing of solo viola and orchestra evokes the English pastoral school more than once. The first movement goes so far as to hover around one of the themes from the first movement of Elgar's cello concerto at times, occasionally declaring its allegiances with open quotation, but its smooth serenity is blown away in the second movement with its dialogue between the coarse double stopping of the soloist and a robust trumpet. Thereafter the threads of tranquillity are picked up again in slow third and the memory-filled fourth movements.

It is without question a satisfyingly shaped scheme, and one filled with unfailingly effective music. But it continues to perplex me, precisely because it suggests that everything should not be taken at face value. I'm sure there is no irony intended on Holloway's part: he is not looking askance at romanticism; he writes the kinds of melodies and harmonies he does because he likes the way they sound, and not for the sake of any dogmatic aesthetic stance. But how then is one supposed to take the Elgarian allusions — do they hint at an undisclosed subtext, or touch upon a world of nostalgia that the composer feels unable to conjure unaided, or were they suggested simply by the conjunction of the solo viola and orchestra — there was an arrangement of the Elgar cello concerto made for the viola player Lionel Tertis — or is it simply (and this is the explanation I favour) that Holloway cannot help himself, that his sympathy for such a wide range of romantic music cannot but overflow into his own work sometimes in an overt way? Perhaps we should stop worrying about when the composer will declare himself and get on with savouring the music. □

## FILMS

# Daughters and lovers

John Coleman



**Innocence (Jane Snowden in *The Frog Prince*). . .**

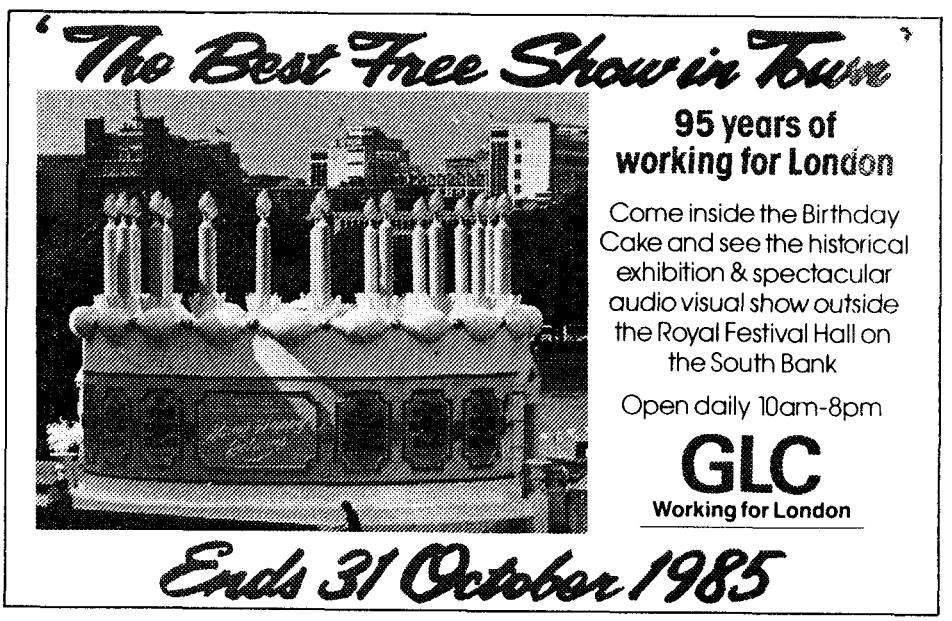
**Dim Sum** (U)
*Screen on the Hill*

**The Frog Prince** (15)
*Warner; Classic, Tottenham Court Road; ABC, Fulham Road*

**Cocoon** (PG)
*Odeon, Leicester Square*

**Crimes of Passion** (18)
*Odeon, Haymarket*

AN AGEING CHINESE WOMAN slowly takes some pills. Then she settles at her sewing machine. There is a bird in a cage hanging between two potted plants. Another look at the table, then backwards to take in the whole room. A quiet street. A laden barge passes. A young Chinese woman sits cross-legged by the river. The water shimmers. A Chinese man moves about behind a low-lit bar. Closing time. Now the credits come up: **Dim Sum — A**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**Little Bit of Heart.**

The title refers to a Chinese titbit or delicacy, with punning extensions, to be developed. And already it is abundantly clear that the Hong Kong-born director Wayne Wang (whose very different first feature, *Chan Is Missing*, has yet to get a public showing over here) is not merely paying a graceful homage to the Japanese master Ozu but *using* his studied images with deliberate effect. He has established the three main characters of his film — ailing, widowed Mrs Tam (Kim Chew), a seamstress; her unmarried daughter Geraldine (Laureen Chew); and Uncle Tam (Victor Wong), the widow's brother-in-law. He has shown us a San Francisco of startling freshness and tranquillity. And he has prepared us to take ellipses in our visually alert stride, encouraged us to 'only connect'. Economy yields richness. A repeated shot of shoes lined up at the foot of the stairs ranges from the mother's orthopaedic footwear to thoroughly Americanised Geraldine's plastic sandals.

Mrs Tam, it soon emerges, has been told by a fortune-teller she will die at 62 and is quietly resolved to visit the China she left 40 years ago before that happens. For this she must finally pass her test for American citizenship, which entails speaking the English she has so long resisted. Her deep puzzlement when Geraldine asks her for the first president of the United States is magnificently managed. A sheet waves in the breeze from a washing-line, to a snatch of music: a natural break. Then a stars-and-stripes iced cake is revealed, to be taken in to where the mother is playing mah-jongg with her chatty neighbour Aunt Mary and two other women: a celebration: she has succeeded, is formally American.

Much of Aunt Mary's conversational fodder centres on marriage (she insists Mrs Tam must be back in time for her last daughter's wedding: '25 tables!'); and this is a running theme, with both mother and Geraldine apparently in two minds about it, the girl reluctant to leave mum living alone and, anyway, content enough to let things hang on a while with her LA doctor fiancé. When this handsome, amiable Richard flies in for a weekend, the stairs creak horribly as he creeps discreetly up to Geraldine's room at night. But Mrs Tam is shrewder and worldlier than they allow, cheerily telling Aunt Mary over the garden fence next morning, 'I'm letting them sleep in. So I've come out to work in the yard'.

There is a lot of humour, with Uncle Tam its frequent source, whether proposing to his sister-in-law (to ease his niece's conscience?) and getting firmly rebuffed; or reminiscing about the days when they used to have dancers downstairs in the bar: 'The only place a Chinese man could look at a white woman', to which Geraldine retorts, 'A real public service'; or making such a horrible mess of wok-cooking with Mrs Tam away that a quick cut finds him and his niece giggling in a McDonald's. The mother's return from China is at once the funniest and most moving moment in the whole occasion, which — to use a hackneyed image — unwraps and tendrils out in memory like a Japanese paper flower; you are urged to catch it.

Whether a month away from press shows has whetted my appetite or just softened me up is moot, but I must confess to having also greatly

**. . .and experience (Kathleen Turner in *Crimes of Passion*)**

enjoyed Brian Gilbert's **The Frog Prince**, produced under David Puttnam's auspices from a sparky script by Posy Simmonds. The year is 1961 and 17-year-old Jenny (delightful Jane Snowden) has been entrusted to the bluff mercies of the family Peroche in the suburbs of Paris while 'finishing' at the Sorbonne. A rumpled Norwegian student, Niels (Oystein Wiik), immediately befriends her and falls for her while she succumbs to the Gallic good looks of a would-be young plane-designer, Jean-Philippe (Alexandre Sterling), met in a jazz cellar where she is demurely reading in a corner as her pre-Sloane Ranger school chum Ros (marvellously vowelled Diana Blackburn) goes corybantic in the best 'U' tradition.

Comes a moment when Jean-Philippe feels the snogging has to stop in favour of a bedding. They row, separate, come together again, once more diverge when Jenny insists he first learn some marked passages of *Romeo and Juliet* to recite to her. Then, *mirabile dictu*, on a métro platform he catches up with her, launches into impassioned chunks of the Bard: and the damned scene actually comes off, with amused passengers applauding and all. And, with the fine callousness of youth, it is Jenny — when money runs out for a hotel — who knocks on Niels's door and asks the poor bastard if he would mind frightfully . . . This is so whackily true to life it is breathtaking. And, en route to Jenny's merry defloration, there have been many authentic touches and episodes and eccentricities. Granny in the suburbs munches up scraps of newspaper; all the Frenchmen Jenny meets politely enquire if she knows Crawley, Surrey ('Sorry?'), or Scarborough or Chipping Sodbury; Ros consistently outrages — of Gallic males: 'It's jolly difficult to know if they're common or not', of affairs: 'Jolly dicey with a frog, Jenny, you know. Suppose you got *thingy* — preggers?'; and all the time Jenny is demonstrably, interestingly growing in confidence, till she's having a perfectly splendid, romantic Paris. Did this withered old heart good, it did.

WHICH IS more than can be said for the manner of wish-fulfilment that forms the soggy core of Ron Howard's **Cocoon**, an S-F fantasy of patchwork borrowings from *E.T.* and *Close Encounters*, whereby a quartet of aliens in human guise (see them strip off their rubbery skins to look like simplified humanoid 1,000 watt light bulbs) land to recuperate some 10,000-year-old fellows dried up in boulders on the seabed off Florida and inadvertently soak them in a swimming pool illicitly frequented by such senior citizens as Don Ameche, Hume Cronyn and Wilford Brimley, who are thereby rejuvenated with heavy stress on sex. To see Mr Ameche seemingly break-dancing is to die a little. Leave it.

Ken Russell's **Crimes of Passion**, however, effortfully tops even this in the sick-and-silly stakes, with an MCP deserting his wife for a fashion-designer-by-day, all-out-whore-by-night (Kathleen Turner), this crazy woman being pursued by a madder priest, Anthony 'psycho' Perkins brandishing a sharpened steel vibrator conceivably used to cut the film. □

## Recommended viewing

*A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds*

**Birdy** Eloquent images, inspired technique, skin-tight performances give brave lift-off to allegory-flecked adventures in blue-collar Philly of ornithological obsessive (Matthew Modine) and butch buddy (Nicolas Cage), later traumatised by Vietnam. Alan Parker's most sympathetic venture since *Bugsy*.

**The Purple Rose of Cairo** Woody Allen's brilliantly faceted, sad-funny fantasy, as relevant to our depressed Eighties as its Depression Thirties. Actor in idiot flick descends from New Jersey screen briefly to woo movie-mad, downtrodden housewife, making chaos and whoopee. (Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels).

**Witness** Australian director Peter Weir in fine-tuned control of offbeat US thriller. Rugged but honest city policeman (Harrison Ford), grudgingly harboured from bent colleagues by time-warp Amish farmers, shares unconsummated love with Kelly McGillis's superb widow until the inevitable, estranging shoot-out.



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## THEATRE

# A murder enquiry

Benedict Nightingale

**Split Second**
DENNIS McINTYRE *Lyric Studio*

AS THE TITLE of *Split Second* emphasises, the young black policeman's decision is instinctive, instantaneous. He chases a would-be car-thief for several blocks through New York's Lower West Side, catches up with him, handcuffs him, radios for a wagon and waits for it to arrive.

The prisoner, who happens to be white, whines and pleads and then begins to mock his captor, topping each racial insult with another yet more insufferable. The cop takes the barrage for a bit, then snaps. As he explains later, 'I didn't see any handcuffs, I just saw his mouth, then I checked out his heart and it made sense, it was making his mouth *move*.' Round he swivels, up jerks his gun, off it goes with a crack and the problem is solved, at least temporarily. The heart has a hole in it, the mouth is silent.

It's a striking opening, and a somewhat surprising one. The horizons of so many American dramatists these days are relentlessly, unrelievedly domestic. Their plays are usually to be found snugly sequestered on porches, in living rooms, round the family hearth, anywhere but in the big bad world beyond. Yet our London September has already managed to throw up two that are undeniably more venturesome.

*Aunt Dan and Lemon* at the Court sometimes seems loose, artless, implausible; but there's no denying the intelligence and courage that Wallace Shawn brings to his subject, which is the intellectual corruption of a minor, the shaping of a fascist consciousness. You couldn't for a moment accuse him of succumbing to that common contemporary self-indulgence, that of travestying the case of the moral and political enemy. Clearly, he doesn't personally believe that compassion is an illusion, that cruelty is a driving human need, that only viciousness at the top can guarantee security and comfort for the masses below or that the Nazis were 'right'; but he has respect enough for us in the audience to allow us to appreciate the argument, see its quota of logic, feel some of its horrible pull, perhaps even begin to realise why it seduced a nation. Still, Victoria Radin anatomised the play very ably in these columns last week, so I'll content myself with saying that it shouldn't really be missed, at least by those who think it the function of drama to disconcert and trouble and gnaw at the mind afterwards.

*Split Second* is more optional viewing. Nothing that happens after that first scene quite matches it for intensity and excitement. Mainly that's because the action moves off the street and into what turns out to be a less dramatically explosive forum, the inside of the policeman's harried mind. Should Val listen to his father, himself an ex-cop exaggeratedly proud of having half-made it in a white world, and boldly admit that he committed murder and then covered it up, by removing the cuffs from his prisoner and planting a knife in his dead hand? Or to his wife, who would clearly be devastated if he went to jail? And what, if any, is the relevance of the colour of his skin? Why should he tell truths that will ruin him, when the white man has so little scruple about perverting them when it suits him? Yes — and wasn't he tied to a tree, naked and festooned with poison ivy, by racist punks when he was just six years old? Why shouldn't he hit back when the gibes become castrating, the sneers unendurable?

So the post-mortem continues, leaving one with more than a few doubts about the skill and wisdom of the playwright conducting it. His dialogue can become, if not downright false, if not actual soap, at least a little falser and sudsier than it should be. He doesn't altogether avoid the sentimentality that afflicts so many American writers when overbearing fathers and balky sons are trying to reach an emotional accommodation. More importantly, the play as a whole seems morally confused. Dennis McIntyre fails to explain how his protagonist can claim to be (indeed, obviously *be*) a good, fair law-enforcer, yet turn and argue that the law itself is part of a white conspiracy. Worse, he gradually inveigles us into seeing the dead man as a spokesperson for a bigoted master-race rather than what he manifestly is, a pathetically inadequate drifter, a failure even as a petty criminal, as far beneath Val's contempt as a weed beneath an oak. Is it so much more justifiable to kill him than, let's say, a mentally handicapped person who chucks excrement at a doctor during the ward-rounds?

Yet McIntyre could reasonably reply that he's in the business, not of mounting a nice, careful debate, but of showing a man in an exemplary crisis, grappling with painfully immediate issues with that mixture of honesty, half-honesty and dishonesty most of us would bring to their counterparts in our own lives. He might also claim, with no more than a little immodesty, to have brought passion and power to his portraiture. Certainly, there can't be many other white playwrights with the imaginative reach to create the main character so authoritatively impersonated by Hugh Quarshie or the New York world so deftly embodied by Hugh Wooldridge's production. And, whatever the reservations, the play does have some of that size and resonance currently missing in the work of American dramatists of each and every ethnic background. So far from being the cop-out one had feared, it might almost be called a cop-in: a piece that uses the turbulent conscience of one black policeman to make you look long and searchingly at your own. □

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## TELEVISION

# Andrew Rissik
# Cut up doc

IN TELEVISION the last word goes to the programme makers and it confers upon them enormous power. On Monday night BBC1's **Panorama** was devoted to a film profile of SDP leader Dr David Owen, and here the medium deployed its advantages to awesomely subversive effect. In the end, it was a triumph of montage, with interview contradicting interview, archive footage contradicting later testimony and the narrating voice, suavely deadpan, undercutting and deflating much that we were shown. An early scene saw the Owens hosting what was described as a 'highly socially conscious' tea party while a woman enquired, in a cut-glass accent, 'India or China?'

Owen emerged from it, quite deliberately I imagine, as the acceptable face of Edward Heath. A spare-time yachtsman, a blunt parliamentary debater and a publicity-conscious diplomat, he gives us Thatcherism without the jagged edges. Affluent, endowed with a usefully nagging conscience and wittily articulate, he lends languid panache and plausible moderation to the severity of the Prime Minister's image.

Parliamentary colleagues clearly do not like Owen or his convenient pragmatism. Dennis Skinner was scathingly and characteristically rude. Owen, he said, was as phoney as a £9 note. Teddy Taylor, on the other hand, chose to be bluntly condescending. He asked, rhetorically, whether Owen had ever espoused an unpopular cause and pronounced him politically immature.

One of Owen's supporters accused him of making policy on his feet, thus pre-empting the process of collective decision taking, to which Owen replied that he did no such thing, and, when he did, it was his duty, as a leader, to do it. There were further sly embarrassments of this kind. Owen's greatest handicap, we were told, is his inability to capture the working-class vote, and the programme amusingly showed him getting into trouble on his yacht, feeding lavishly in a Chinese restaurant with Shirley Williams and Bill Rodgers and lounging around at home with his wife Debbie, a glamorous literary agent who represents the best-selling Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party, Jeffrey Archer. The image is plainly JFK or a diluted, less mischievous SuperMac. If Owen really wants the working-class vote I imagine the evidence of this programme will put him back substantially.

At the end of this profile I turned off having been greatly entertained and maliciously amused. Whether justified or not, it had been the most adroitly persuasive piece of assassination since Central screened their stunning drama-documentary, *The Last Place On Earth*. And, in the face of it, all that a television critic can do is to be equally sceptical. Like the majority of viewers I have no specialist



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information, no file of my own and, turning on in genuine interest, I am only too susceptible to a barbed and authoritative viewpoint of this kind.

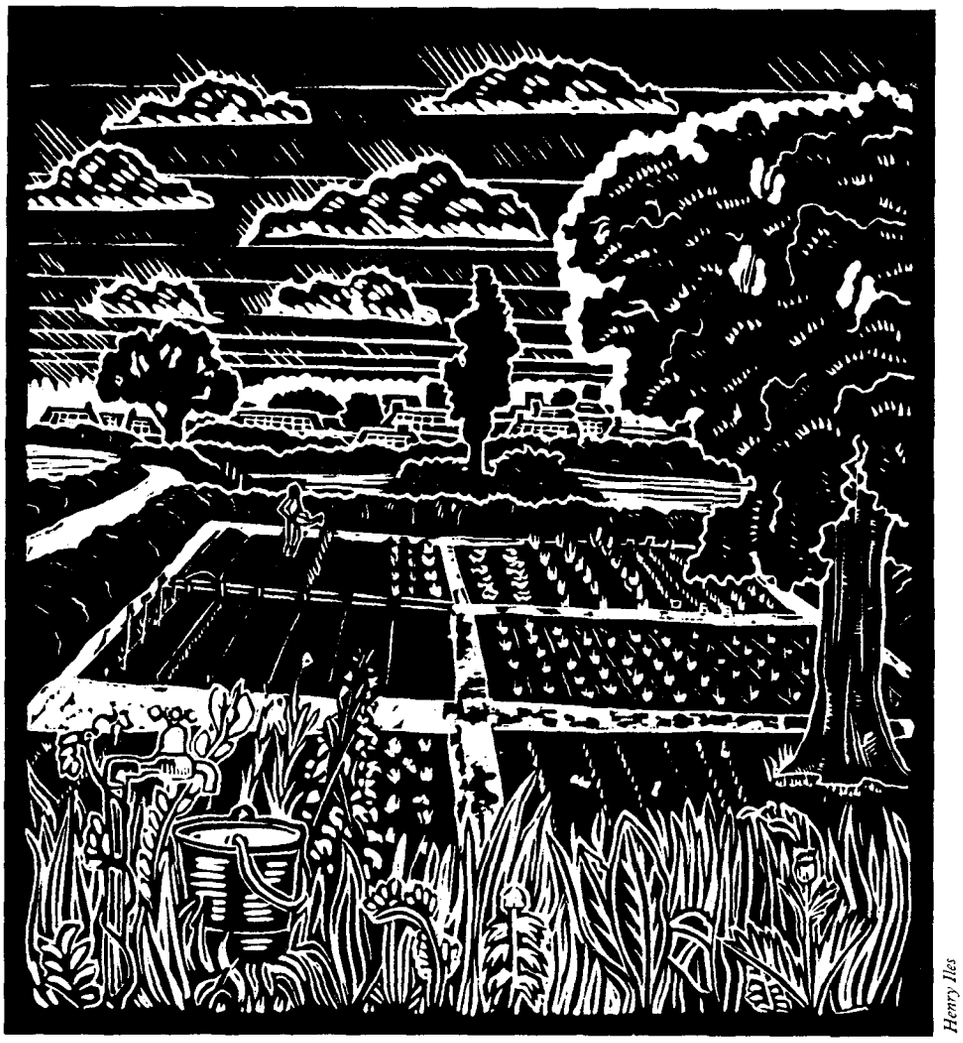
Finally, my qualm is that this *Panorama* was, if anything, too assured and convincing a piece of television. I cannot deny that it was richly watchable and seductively funny but I have no method of testing its validity. When television claims to be impartial, on whose side does the impartiality rest? And, if we are to be given what amounts to a collective version of a personal view, what is the informing personality behind it? It is very easy to invite ridicule through the skilful manipulation of film. It is very easy to be clever from the security of the voice-over studio.

THE RETURN of Alf Garnett in BBC1's **In Sickness And In Health** has brought back television's most indefatigable bigot. In Johnny Speight's admirably vivid scripts Garnett isn't so much a reactionary as a malcontent. One way or another, he protests about everything that is there and, in this, he is probably far too much like the rest of us for comfort. During the Sixties, Garnett appeared to be a spokesman for the Old England that Wilsonism had vanquished. Splenetic, prejudiced and venomously articulate, he was the decade's court jester, tolerated because his impossible views actually threatened no one.

In the middle of the Thatcherite Eighties, he is old himself, has a crippled wife and is murderously angry about it. One of the best scenes in the first episode showed him trading abuse with an irate motorist whose way he is blocking. Garnett's retort is that he is using the road because the pavement is deep in parked cars and, shouted at and insulted, he grits his teeth and gives as good as he gets. In the second episode, though, the mechanism of farce took over and Garnett's rhetoric was blunted. We watch the character to hear him rage and seethe and fulminate, not to see him involved in some improbable comedy outside a public lavatory. If Speight will let it, Garnett's voice will probably capture the sour indifference of the Eighties as well as it criticised the modish extravagance of the Sixties. Warren Mitchell plays the role with a new, steely malice and desperation.

Channel Four's four-part documentary, **Spaceflight**, which ended last week, concluded with an infectiously optimistic foray into the realms opened to humanity by the possibility of space travel. It covered the Star Wars technology with sober accuracy but it also suggested that we are on the threshold of an age in which science might finally outmanoeuvre war.

Space offers us undreamed possibilities for expansion and discovery. In the course of time it may render nuclear weapons obsolete; it may give our urbanised, industrialised society a new, more appropriate source of mineral wealth than our own planet; it may increase dramatically our knowledge and command of medicine and surgery; above all, it may eventually provide us with a larger objective than tribal belligerence. This was a clear-headed, uplifting programme and I do not believe that its scientific optimism is entirely misplaced. □



*Henry Iles*

# Grounds for hope

## Angela Harding

ALLOTMENTS SHOULD reassure ecologists about nature's survival. All around disused patches drown in grasses full of flowers, also known as weeds, butterflies float by — the cabbage white invariably coming to a rest. A friend warned me it was forbidden to pull thistles because they were scarce. I was speechless. On an allotment, scarce thistles are not.

Thistle thickets notwithstanding, allotments aren't really ecologists' ground. They're a busy and domestic world, not given to trespass — particularly by weeds (you've no idea what your boots transport) — and very individual. Ducking versions of the natural world, they dodge the formats of commerce too, although they're business*like*. They cheat on all theories, producing a very mixed economy. Really a semi-rural dream the semi-urban villa couldn't give up, of a land John Clare knew and Dickens mourned passing, they're in no sense real country.

Well, not in fact, but. . . When I first saw it three years ago my allotment was bare and looked vast. Unlike the odd corners of the garden that I then used, this long, straight plot would have everything in one place, and in lines. But it was the hawthorn hedges, elderberries, great trees and muddy lanes that sold it to me. This was Country and I could at last grow Food. I could almost *see* the rows of beans and lettuces. I pictured myself sitting under a huge oak nearby before gathering my tomatoes, and I rented it.

Within a month the green, dreaming grass had swamped it and I've needed that tree ever since to deal with reality. I've sat under it, staring at misshapen crops, in all seasons — grim winter twilights, blustery March days, and drought. The latter brought the mechanical difficulties of growing to a head.

Lacking a hose a quarter-of-a-mile long to reach our water tap, I set about dragging two five-gallon cans, learning all Jane Fonda could teach about muscles. The load seemed a dribble once there — for marrows this week, or peas? And, at work all day, how can you, unless you go — as some do — at 5.30 am, be there often enough? And how much water plants need. Half-a-dozen marrows and a row of peas may survive on five gallons a week but potatoes on plots around me were receiving four straight hours of water on the trot. Mine had to be dropped from my schedule that first hot



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summer, and so those mad March days when I spaced them in their trenches, clumsily advancing towards a vision of bagging sacksfull for winter's provision, ended one blazing August day with nothing. I duly lifted them — and walked off the plot for good.

All the backbone, and much of the work, had been provided by my co-tenants throughout. What went into the ground, they said, manure and your spade, would make a difference. It was certainly memories of digging the previous autumn, dark backs in November mists, bonfires burning, that brought me back; though now the soil I turned on very wintry mornings was white with frost and hard.

But even the wisest words may need to be — sidestepped? Infrequent visits do work, if you know when to plant, when the weeds bloom; shears can crop the most overwhelming weeds. Maybe the plot *should* be left bare until every rod, pole and perch of it has been blasted clear, but then every seedling set out nurtures hope in the novice allotmenteer. And, until experienced, any new allotmenteer (and old too?) *needs* dreams.

What really confounds those dreams with reality though is money. You hope to *save* by growing, but proficient allotmenteers spend like a branch of Harrods. Even the economical were, when I first started, finding that they spent as much as they would have on market vegetables. As the cost of the latter has increased and become a fixed non-seasonal digit, however, the older organising of store and clamp — and freezer nowadays — is making economic sense again. But this doesn't unravel the ambivalence at the heart of it all: the modest dream, knowing its limits and its purpose, storing and cropping successionally against every month and condition of the year, and the champion fact, the legendary allotment of prize marrow and perfect leek, investing in the 'country' for no known profit nor any motive but its own, turning all your visions into stupendous reality — have you ever *seen* a four-foot parsnip?

You will, lights already on in the halls on autumn days at the nearest thing to a Harvest Home our era naturally produces, the round of September shows. Homely and epic vegetables mingle with jams and rotund blooms resplendent in Blue Ribbons, celebrating a year's work — and good company, for, while still a little untame, they're sociable, these most real, if most perplexing, of wild gardens. □

*If you're interested in an allotment, contact your local council. I rent mine for under £10 p.a. The allotment society on the site and/or your local gardening society are worth joining; both will have trading huts where prices are low and will give invaluable advice and support. A. H.*

**Among this week's contributors:**

**J. C. Hall's** *Selected and New Poems 1939-84* will be published by Secker on 23 September.

**David Edgar's** plays include *Destiny*, recently revived at the Half Moon.

**Paul Roazen's** books include *Freud: Political and Social Thought* and *Freud and his Followers*.

## Naseem Khan

# Spice of life

THERE is something really unlikely about Etal. Not just the fact that it's so pretty — babbling brook, thatched pub, etc. — in an unaustere, unNorthumbrian way, or that it's one of those Martha-like places glorying in its Best Kept Village prize. It's the way people were dressed when I was there: women in long dresses, men in collarless shirts and bowlers. For this was Edwardian Week in Etal and the folk at that moment were flocking in to the miniature Thirties village hall for an evening of Edwardian music hall and fun.

Now ordinarily I would have fled to the other side of the Tweed; there are few things I detest more than Edwardian Music Hall. But in this case the promoters, local folk enthusiasts Steve Taylor and Alan Green, have imaginatively booked Cosmotheka for the evening, and that's another matter.

Cosmotheka is a two-man team. Al and Dave Sealey are brothers from the West Midlands — chunky men, ex-sales reps — who specialise in the popular songs of Victorian and Edwardian times (the duo's name comes from a London music hall). Usually the Sealeys work the folk circuit, with an occasional foray into television and once, when I saw them, the thin-blooded good taste of London's Purcell Room. Any group that can get a South Bank audience stomping and shouting — 'How's your father?' call the Sealeys; back comes the yell, 'All right!' — must have something going for it. But would it work in Etal, away from London lights?

You can sense a question mark when they first step onto the rickety dais that passes for Etal's stage. They've been preceded by a series of dressed-up folk doing funny monologues and comic songs in their olden-days gear. And now here come the Sealeys, just ordinary chaps really. Grey trousers, blue shirts, ties. Tubby fellows with beer bellies and good-natured faces and one guitar between the two of them.

Mild they might look, but gentle they are not. From the word 'go' they're off, charging — after a bit of patter — into the manic attack of 'Never Let Your Braces Dangle', Harry Champion's cautionary tale, from around 1911, of the awful things that can happen to a man whose support lets him down. Very fast, packed with verbal wit and a silly rousing chorus. The audience bleats weakly, 'Dingle dangle.'

Undeterred, the Sealeys bash on with an old George Lashwood number (around 1900) about a disgruntled fellow jilted at the church door. Not a lament, but a hectic song, as he races round trying to find a last-minute substitute:

> Even a man in a kilt will do
> It's a pity to waste the cake.

Then follows a Fred Barnes song — poor Fred Barnes, born a century ago this year to a Birmingham butcher father, king of the popular stage and feted by royalty for a brief, gaudy hour, before drink and scandal destroyed him. Slowly the spirit of the songs is pervading Etal's hall: robust and witty, they manage at one and the same time to be callous and sentimental, rude and proper.

The Sealeys don't just *sing* the songs, as though they were musical historians. They live them out. Their act is larded with cheerful bad jokes ('Doctor, doctor,' cries a man in hospital bed, 'I can't feel my legs.' 'I'm not surprised. I've just cut off your arms'), pseudo-insulting asides, carefully controlled double entendre. 'Timothy, Timothy, let's have a look at it,' warbles Al, specs glinting lubriciously, and no prizes for guessing what 'it' could be. They have the joyful vulgarity of a seaside postcard. Their relationship with the audience varies between matiness and being withering; no showbiz sycophancy here.

The audience by this time is warmly with them (even laughing, can you believe it, at a reference to the *New Statesman*), cheering and shouting like old timers. By the time it comes to the classic 'Brown Boots' they are in the palm of the Sealeys' hands (though the busy bar at the side of the hall could have had something to do with it). The Sealeys don't even need to announce the title. They start it, unaccompanied:

> Our Aunt 'Annah's passed away
> We'd 'er funeral today
> And it was a posh affair
> We 'ad to 'ave two policemen there. . .

An occasion marred, however, by the attire of one of the mourners: 'What do you think 'e was wearing?' Quick as a flash the audience shouts back, 'Brown Boots!' It's not the first time I've heard Cosmotheka sing it, but it never fails to cast a spell. Using the tune of the old piano accompaniment to Stanley Holloway's monologue, the Sealeys turn it into a melancholy lyric — sweet as well as absurd — that keeps its echoes of working-class propriety, solidarity and pride.

It wouldn't be too hard to make fun of some of the old popular songs. Some are distinctly silly, like Billy Williams's 1911 invitation to do the Kangaroo Hop. But others, like Ernie Mayne's florid lament 'Love, Love, Love, Look What It's Done to Me' (1918) ('I eat no breakfast, I eat no dinner/Every day I get thinner and thinner') have a splendidly full-blooded sweep to them, and a anarchic humour.

It is not kind humour. This is a tough world — a world in which disabilities are mocked (the man with the lithp), a world of banana skins and natural disasters where you can all too easily come by Two Lovely Black Eyes 'Only for telling a man he was wrong', or be caught out in outré situations (as in Fred Earle's 'Up Went My Little Umbrella'). But it's a world of resourcefulness, stoicism and wit: the undervalued roots of popular culture.

'We've had a really wonderful evening,' Al tells the beaming hall.

'But it wasn't tonight,' adds Dave, before self-congratulation can set in.

Cosmotheka don't only preserve, they keep a tradition alive. Pawn your tap shoes, sell the cat: see them. □



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# Weekend competition

**No 2890** **Set by May Day**

People often say of someone: Who does he/she think he/she is? Could we please have the answer, in max. 12 lines of verse, from any famous, living person so attacked? Deadline 25 September.

**No 2887** **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Pop lyrics in support of some right-wing cause.

**Report** **By Ms de Meaner**

Returning from several sun-soaked weeks on a private island near Istanbul, one does not, my very dear Olaf Cowan, expect to find a letter beginning: 'You know your problem, don't you?' That said, I have reluctantly to admit that you might have a point. My 'problem', Mr Cowan explains, is that some of my readers 'wouldn't know a pop lyric if they tripped over one'. Ignoring his use of one of the tireder clichés in the English language, it has to be said that those among you who entered lyrics to be sung to the tune of 'The Red Flag', for example, or to one or other of Mr Sullivan's melodies, do rather confirm his suspicions. Perhaps, one evening, you might take the plunge and twiddle your dial towards Radio One — or, if you're feeling *really* outrageous, one of the North Sea pirates. Ten pounds a head to those below — and you will, I feel sure, do better next week.

*(With apologies to Pink Floyd)*

They don't need no education,
Give 'em tougher crowd control;
Too much reading makes 'em bolshy,
Wrecks the forelock-tugging prole.
Pack the bastards into classrooms.
Drill 'em on how not to think.
Workers don't need no opinions,
Workers don't need pens and ink.
Get it straight, Brits are great.
Being stupid makes 'em proud.
We're the best, fuck the rest:
Hey teacher! No more cash allowed.

ALISON PRINCE

I ain't got no dental caries
Mucking up me grin.
The word up here and everywhere is
Caries are a sin.

So I went to see me dentist fella
Wiv the starched white coat.
He said me teef were awful yella
Then grabbed me by the throat.

He said, you need a dozen fillings,
And then laid down the score.
Good old Maggie, no more drillings,
I ain't got no teef no more.

KATIE MALLETT

You gotta love em better,
You just gotta love the fuzz,
You gotta love the lads in blue,
These guys are looking after *you*.

So give em shooters, give em bread,
Help em kill the villains dead,
Give em whips and heavy boots,
Give em lots of new recruits.

The judges are a right soft lot,
The legal birds are dumb.
So leave it to the policemen
To finish off the scum.

PHILIP A. NICHOLSON

*Belt!*

When I was younger, much less stronger than today,
I used to kick in heads in any kind of way,
But now I'm twenty-two, my thoughts are less impure,
In fact I find that's all behind — and belting was the cure.
Belt me when you can, and I'll come rou-ou-ound,
Belt me when my fingers touch the grou-ou-ound,
Belt me so the boys can hear the sou-ou-ound —
Won't you please, please belt me,
Oooooooooh!

WILL BELLENGER

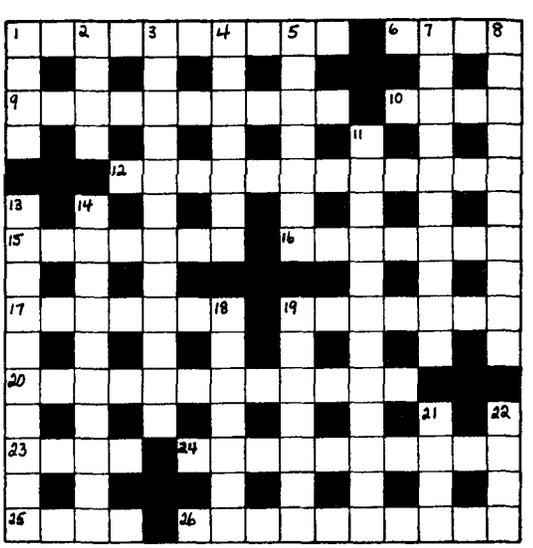
*Imagine*

Imagine there's no unions,
We've swept them all away,
And all the cringing minions
Will slave for quarter pay —
Imagine all the profits
Which then would come our way:
You might say I'm a dreamer,
But dreams like this are fun —
With Mrs T as leader
We've only just begun.

FRANK PURCELL

# Weekend Crossword 1492

**PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1492, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 24 September.**



Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

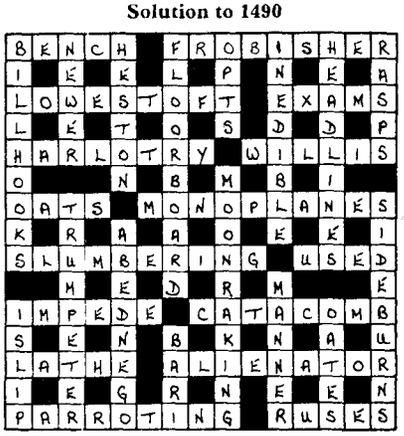
1. In one's wildest dreams the college appears to be put in order (10)
6. A record in Scotland is copied out wrongly (4)
9. Unusual icon in which there is a representation of a very distinguished person burning (10)
10. Insect is to run away, we hear (4)
12. Put off before I made a speech and got worse (12)
15. Muse-like groups? (7)
16. Without one she would be a deformed girl (7)
17. What a revisionist does to a politician during revolutions (7)
19. If the hair looked different in the middle it could be fragile (7)
20. His parents are involved with public relations associations (12)
23. Seduced when one is held by a boy (4)
24. One man in a row is given a look to provide an account of the picture (4,6)
25. Painful feature of the worst year's harvest ever (4)
26. Publication permitted in Western broadcast (10)

DOWN

1. Symbol of authority of cowboy's leader in the West (4)
2. Frost for poetry (4)
3. Act aggressively in going back to base for a social occasion (12)
4. Post for landladies (7)
5. Gradually wearing away the material, being a sculptor at heart (7)
7. Not fit to repeat, being unworthy of a scholar (10)
8. Composer in a foreign company right as an adornment of the room (10)
11. Part of a book is a little bit on the cover (12)
13. If the city were rebuilt it could be more spoilt (10)
14. College which gives one poetry in drama feature (10)
18. Guess what is certain about one put in writing (7)
19. Place for scholars without something to eat (7)
21. Indeed this ancient would be painted (4)
22. Cutter in London sounds like another vessel (4)

SETSQUARE

**Solution to 1490**



**Prizewinners to 1490**

K. W. Dudley (Liverpool)
J. Walsh (Machynlleth, Powys)
Lorna Woods (West Calder, W. Lothian)



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## APPOINTMENTS

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requires

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**This is a key secretarial/administrative job working with the business managers of the Statesman & Nation Publishing Company. The job is a mixture of conventional secretarial work plus as much general administration as the successful applicant can handle.**

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**New Statesman,**
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**TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS UNION**

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Applications are invited for a post in the Transport & General Workers' Union's Research Department at their Central Office for **Research Assistant** to contribute to general policy briefing and the servicing of TGWU Trade Groups. An ability to write clearly and concisely is a vital requirement of this position, which involves the drafting of documentation over a wide range of policy and public issues.

An Economics/Social Science Degree or equivalent qualifications would normally be required for this post, along with an ability to work under pressure to a high standard.

Applicants are expected to have previous experience in this field, and a background in the labour movement.

The annual salary for the post is **£10,467.08**, plus LVs and 5 weeks holiday.

Applications (and enquiries) should be addressed to: **Mr R. Collins, Central Office Manager, TGWU, Transport House, Smith Square, Westminster, London SW1P 3JB.**

**Application forms are available on request (phone 01-828 7788)** and a statement in support and a CV would be welcomed by **Monday, 30 September** at the latest.

*The TGWU is an equal opportunity employer.*

**CIVIL LIBERTIES TRUST** seeks part-time Secretary. Interesting responsible job. Secretarial skills required. London, home based. Tel. 01-435 8796.

**OV SELECTION** have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

**STOPP** (Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment) needs three day a week worker. Duties include lobbying, publicity, casework and research. Experience/skills in these areas and ability to type required. Salary £5,667 pa. Further details and application form from: STOPP, 18 Victoria Park Square, London E2 9PB (01-980 8523). Closing date: 2 October.

**Charterhouse-in-Southwark is looking for an ADMINISTRATOR**

Are you gold dust seeking an exciting job with a developing community organisation?

We need someone experienced in a wide range of secretarial/office skills and with an interest in the application of new technology to administrative tasks.

If you feel you have the flair, initiative and skills to cope with this varied job telephone **01-407 1123** for further details and an application form. Salary **£6,855-9,183** (incl. London Weighting). Closing date for completed applications: **4 October 1985.**

**We have an anti-racist policy and a commitment to be an equal opportunities employer.**

Confederation of Health Service Employees

**COHSE**

**Journalist/ Editorial Assistant**
Salary £8,649-£9,540 plus £1,032 London Weighting
*(22 days leave; 35 hour week)*

COHSE is Britain's largest trade union for Health and Social Service staffs with a membership of over 230,000 spread throughout the grades and professions in the NHS.

We are looking for an experienced Journalist/Editorial Assistant to work in the union's busy Editorial Department which currently handles the whole range of COHSE's Campaign and publicity literature and the production of the union's monthly newspaper *Health Services.*

The type of candidate we have in mind will be a member (or prepared to become a member) of the National Union of Journalists and have worked as a newspaper or magazine journalist, in a specialist Campaign Unit or similar publications department. Interest in and commitment to the trade union movement essential; knowledge of Health and Social Services an asset.

Applications in writing, including curriculum vitae and samples of published work, to the General Secretary, COHSE, Glen House, High Street, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2LH, not later than Wednesday 2 October 1985.

Britain's Health Service Union



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# APPOINTMENTS

## Arts Assistant
## (Light Entertainment) £8,577-£9,354

Greenwich's Arts and Entertainments Section is looking for someone with energy and enthusiasm to join its team.

The office is based in Woolwich. Your job will be to assist the development of Greenwich's Policy for community arts in consultation with local people, existing community arts organisations and staff, and to plan out a strategy which will achieve this. In doing so you'll be providing advice and support in a flexible way to all the above-mentioned and to Council Members. One of your main aims will be to encourage stability and support for community arts in the Borough, including the support of new initiatives.

You will have at least two years' good experience (waged or unwaged) of community arts work, know your way around the various funding sources and be able to talk effectively to all kinds of people. You'll also be able to write clear reports, meet deadlines, work within a team (including taking your turn at running events promoted by the Section) and be practical rather than a philosopher. Greenwich is a multi-racial area and has all the characteristics you'd expect to find in an inner London Borough, so you'll need to be sympathetic to the Borough's policy objectives. Finally, you'll have to have a current driving licence and be available to work unsocial hours.

It's not essential, but it'll help if you already know the Borough, are numerate and have access to a car.

A departmental review is pending, which may change the way the Department works but won't alter the skills required. An essential car user's allowance may be payable and a car purchase loan will be available. Overtime is also payable.

Application form from: **Chief Executive, London Borough of Greenwich, Peggy Middleton House, 50 Woolwich New Road, Woolwich, SE18 6HQ.** Tel: **01-854 8888 Ext. 2034.**

**Closing date: 27 September 1985**

**The Council positively welcomes applications from women, ethnic minorities and disabled people.**

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a Community Arts Project on a large Southwark Estate requires 2 P/T workers:

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Job descriptions from **W.A.C.A.T., Shop 8, Taplow Block, Thurlow Street, London SE17.**

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**TYPING/AUDIO,** word processing, accommodation address, telephone answering service. Reasonable rates. 01-794 6894.

# PERSONAL

**AMERICAN MALE,** crossing Canada by car to West coast early October, seeks female companion. Low-budget venture, share expenses. Box (37)1458.

**HEART SEARCH**
**01-251 5487**

**ARE YOU** a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

**DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY** accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

**ELEGANT LADY** (40s), sought by tall, attractive, solvent, non-smoking professional man, Londoner, Jewish, with Continental background and international outlook. Box (37)1441.

**FEMALE ARCHITECT,** 30, lively, intelligent, socialist. Likes books, films, the arts, travelling, cycling and lots more. Looking for a similar male. London. Box (37)1427.

**FEMALE GRADUATE,** 33, seeks similarly radical, sensitive, self-accepting man; interests *nature, health, intellectual and sensual* pleasures. Likes long hair, jeans. No druggies. London. Photo? Box (36) 1410.

**GRADUATE MALE,** 50, non-careerist, ex-lecturer and almost everything else (too bad I don't write paperbacks — the cv fits) seeking True Love, again, hopefully permanent this time. Willing to uproot and start new life elsewhere, preferably anywhere. Likes: books, music, words, films, poetry and politics. Disillusioned left-wing not in danger of turning *right, more like O'Neill's Larry Slade, pipe* dreams and all. In danger of depression through isolation and exile. Needs company, *organising, and cure for compulsive book and* record buying. Box (37)1431.

**GRADUATE MALE,** 40s, varied interests, would like to meet independent-minded woman, for caring and happy friendship/relationship. Children welcome. Midlands. Box (37)1426.

**INTUITIVE CONTINENTAL** working man, 30s, warm, sensitive nature, unconventional ideas, pipe smoker, mature student; seeks body and soul relationship with interesting woman, any nationality. London. Box (37)1425.

**JUST ABOUT** solvent male teacher, 33, tall, *bearded, gentle, humorous, working in Cornish* coastal town. Seeks a genuine, warm, lively lady. Box (37)1436.

**KIND, INTELLIGENT,** attractive, vital divorcee seeks similar man. 50+ and of some achievement, for serious, yet delightful relationship. York to Newcastle preferred. Box (37)1428.

**MY 50TH SUMMER** flown. The last dozen or so in a vacuous, sterile but non-warring marriage. Now the family gone, I'd shake the dice if I thought a warm, uncomplicated woman, possibly also seeking some sparkle in life would respond. Its got to be worth a throw hasn't it? London. Box (37)1440.

**SHEFFIELD MALE** (45), graduate, idealist *who still (despite Thatcher) retains sanity and* his sense of humour, would like to meet/correspond with like-minded souls. Box (37)1430.

**SINGLE MAN,** 30, Marxist, interested in writing, humour, cinema, sport. Seeks intelligent, articulate, socialist woman with sense of humour, for stable, long-term relationship. Yorkshire. Box (36) 1388.

**SUPER-WONDER-**woman, early 40s, in search of superman (millionaire)? Matrimony if compatible. Box (37)1435.

**THE MARRIAGE BUREAU** (Heather Jenner), 124 New Bond St, W1, 01-629 9634. Individual attention.

**TWO SOCIALIST** males, early thirties, seek women friends South Wales area. Interests: literature, politics, alcohol, good times, etc. Is there life beyond the Severn Bridge? Box (37)1323.

**VISTA,** Simply a nice way for single, *separated, divorced or widowed people to meet* new friends/partners. Brochure: 01-272 1414.

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would like to correspond with you. Friendship, language, travels, marriage, etc.
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**BELGIUM**

**UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR** in Canada, 32, single, male, socialist, affectionate, wide interests, seeks lively socialist female, for long-term relationship. Box (35)1374.

**WARM, AFFECTIONATE MAN** (36), would love to meet a YOUNG (TEENAGE) WOMAN, AGED 16-20, for both an affectionate, warm, loving, mutually supportive friendship, and for a lusty imaginative, uninhibited sexual relationship where we are gentle, sensitive, considerate caring and loving with each other. Informative letter, photo, address/tel. no., please, to John. A.L.A. (Inner/S. London/N. Surrey). Box (37)1429.

# FINANCIAL

**IMMEDIATE ADVANCES** £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

**SALARIED PERSONS** Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

# MESSAGES

**LORNA:** seen around Wimbledon early 1985, please contact Chris, who would like to talk. Box (37) 1444.

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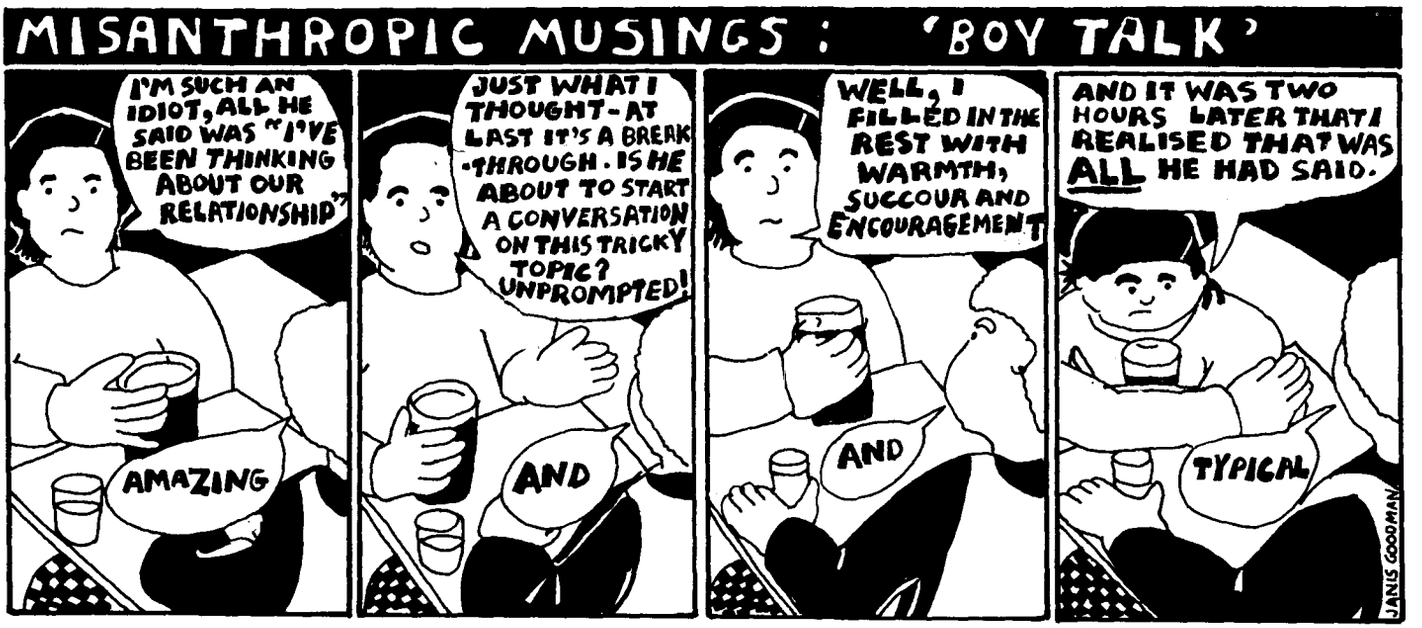
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AND
WELL, I FILLED IN THE REST WITH WARMTH, SUCCOUR AND ENCOURAGEMENT
AND
AND IT WAS TWO HOURS LATER THAT I REALISED THAT WAS ALL HE HAD SAID.
TYPICAL
JANIS GOODMAN

# CHESS
## First Blood

IT IS NICE to be able to resume the *New Statesman*'s chess column, previously conducted by the charming Assiac and the redoubtable Tony Miles. What is more, I could hardly hope for a better opening than to have a world championship match just under way.

The first thing to establish about the Karpov-Kasparov match is where our allegiance lies. For my part it is with the game, not one of the players. I am not going to hail a Kasparov victory as one in the eye for the Soviet chess federation and their pet champion. Nor will I take a successful defence by Karpov to be an appropriate put-down for a 22-year-old youngster whose confidence borders on brashness. This match cannot be expected to settle the obscure issue of who is the greatest. If the 48 games of that previous struggle that dragged on from September 1984 to February of this year failed to put clear daylight between the two, then the 24 games of this match are unlikely to decide the matter.

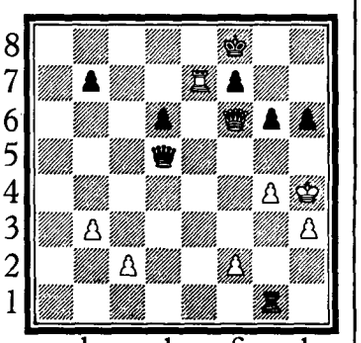
First blood went to Kasparov when he won the first game with White in 42 moves against the champion's Nimzo-Indian Defence. This was a promising start, partly because it rubs out the champion's edge (12-12 is good enough for Karpov to retain the title), but mostly because it shows that after **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6** Kasparov is at last ready to venture the most interesting move, **3. Nc3**, without fear of the pinning reply **3 . . . Bb4.** We saw quite enough of the more evasive Queen's Indian with **3. Nf3 b6** in the last match and it mostly led to draws (in 8 out of 10 games, to be precise).

The onus is now very much upon the champion to prove his worth. He has suffered three consecutive defeats at Kasparov's hands and in the meantime has fallen under the unpleasant suspicion that the earlier match was halted in order to rescue him from an imminent and total collapse. The portrayal of Karpov as a cowardly champion is really quite grossly unfair. No previous title-holder has been so ready and willing to meet his main rivals in tournament play and he even took the initiative in a vain attempt to persuade the recalcitrant Fischer to face him in a match. He has the chance now to remind his many detractors of the outstanding fighting capacity that he has shown in the decade that he has ruled world chess.

Even for those who are not so interested in the moves and the analysis of the games there is a curious fascination in these modern gladiatorial combats in which two highly talented individuals lay their egos out for bruising. The tales of past battles have been retold by many pens. When I unwrapped a review copy of William Hartston's *The Kings of Chess* (Michael Joseph, £12.95) I could not suppress a cynical groan. Not another coffee-table Cook's tour through chess history! And to be published on the very day this match started. Blatant chessploitation. But then I started to read and couldn't put it down for two whole days. I must congratulate Bill. He has managed to produce something which is not only an informative and authoritative history, but also captures all the magical excitement of the game.

**Problem**

In this position from the 1985 W. German junior championship white played **1. Rd7.** What had he overlooked?



**Solution**

Black replied **1 . . . Qh5 + !** forcing mate after **2. gxh5 g5+! 3. Qxg5 hxg5.** Now comes the further, deeper question for you to ponder. Would **1. f4** have produced a different result?

**George Botterill**

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# QUIZ

1. Which politician, with his broken right arm in plaster, was given bad news last week?
2. Which six-year-old girl with her broken right leg in plaster sat on a politician's knee last week?
3. 'It is very nice on Tuesday and Thursday, and other evenings when the work is done, to partake of a little of this most excellent product.' Who is the partaker, and what is the product?
4. 'I may have been careless in my language on that one thing but I was talking about improvements that actually do exist and there have been made.' Who is the careless speaker, and where is 'there'?
5. Who is the man in room 105?
6. What was the 'thing that is in Room 101'?
7. Which politician allegedly once recommended *Giovanni's Room* as bedside reading?

**Answers**

1. Patrick Jenkin
2. Lucy Owen, daughter of David Owen
3. Margaret Thatcher praising J & B Scotch whisky
4. Ronald Reagan 'clarifying' his remarks about South Africa
5. Brigadier Ronnie Sionham (at the BBC)
6. 'The worst thing in the world' (according to O'Brien in *Nineteen Eighty-four*)
7. Jeremy Thorpe

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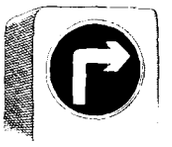
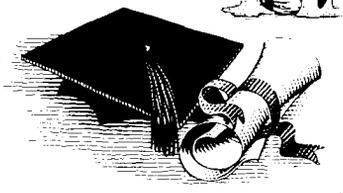
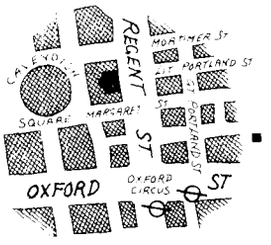
WHETHER YOU FANCY a career as a at the , as a Russian interpreter or as a whizz-kid, pcl will set you on the  course.

It was so, as a centre of learning, it's not exactly —though it's with new ideas. Its reputation for  excellence is legendary.

Best of all it's right in the of  .

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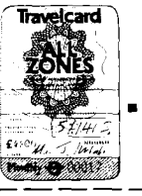
You should find that at least one of the 500 courses has been designed to fit in with your , your work, your family...and your  .

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